

Year of Changes

Disclaimer: None of this belongs to me and I am not making any \$\$\$ off of it. This world belongs to the talented JKR, I am just playing with it.

Note: This is a continuation of my story Summer of Independence which began at the end of book 5; therefore this story is AU to HBP and DH. I do not have a beta, I spell checked as best I could... but please no flames for spelling, punctuation or grammar errors. I am an engineer not an editor so forgive me ahead of time. I will attempt to update every week or two, as time permits in my hectic life.

Warnings: This story will contain Dumbledore and Weasley bashing. So this is your warning in case this is not the type of story you like to read. There will be nothing graphic or explicit as it is a PG story.

Continuation of Summer of Independence...

Recap of last chapter: Winding Down

Harry, Neville and Hermione helped Dudley get everything into his trunk. The four friends spent the rest of their summer vacation just relaxing and having fun. They went to a movie one night but the rest of the time just stayed inside and talked about everything that had changed that summer.

Hermione had to leave for a few days, accompanied by Moody, to visit the Temple. She was quickly learning about her new faith and responsibilities. She was also able to spend some time with her mum who had filed for divorce already and was living in a nice flat Hermione was paying for.

Dudley was sad he would have to go back to school but determined to learn as much as possible while he was away in the muggle world. He couldn't believe what a great summer it had been. He went from despising his cousin to him being his best friend. He just wished his parents had been as cool as Remus describes his Aunt Lily and Uncle James to have been. If his parents had welcomed Harry into

their home he could have grown up with a brother in Harry and could have perhaps found out about the wizarding world much earlier.

Neville was having the best summer of his life. He had friends that really cared about him and he didn't feel stupid or left out. He was looking forward to their next year at Hogwarts. It would prove to be interesting and he was planning on helping Harry in any way he could.

Harry thought it was an interesting summer. He was finally free of the manipulation of Dumbledore. He had effectively taken him out as the leader of the war. He had enough evidence to get him kicked out of Hogwarts and into Azkaban if he chose to use it. He would see how the school year went but he would no longer be his pawn. He wondered what the year would hold... who the DADA teacher would be... and just what adventures awaited him and his friends once they boarded the Hogwarts Express.

The End of Summer of Independence

Chapter 1: Train Ride Back

For the first time ever Harry was early arriving for the train back to school. Since he could legally use magic there was no mad rush of packing at the last minute. As he had kept the majority of his things in his trunk anyway he had very little to pack up. He, Hermione, Neville and Dudley had just passed through to Platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ and were giving Dud his first look at the gleaming scarlet steam engine of the Hogwarts Express.

"That is the coolest train I have ever seen," Dudley declared, trying to hide his sadness at the fact that he would never get to ride it or go to Hogwarts.

Harry could see the sadness and longing in his cousin's eyes and wished he could take him with them to school. Dudley would not have been safe at Hogwarts, there was no place for a squib cousin of Harry Potter with the current fights going on. The Slytherins would tear him to pieces and the so-called light side wouldn't be much better. One of the things he hoped to change about the magical world someday was the awful prejudices of the people. Harry firmly

believed that there was no good or evil magic, just the intent of the caster. There were no such things as good and evil creatures either. Vampires and werewolves were not inherently evil, just widely misunderstood. Additionally there were the prejudices against those with less magic like muggles, squibs, house elves and goblins. He hoped that with the seats he and Hermione held in the Wizengamot he could eventually make some changes.

"We'll miss you Dud and I'll write as often as I can and send it through Harry's Gringotts box." Hermione told Dudley and gave him a huge hug which made both of them blush.

"Stay safe Dud and write if you need anything. Dobby would probably respond if you called him if it was an emergency as well as Fawkes." Harry said and the two cousins shared a very brief hug as neither had been raised to value positive physical contact.

Neville shook his hand and then led them onto the train to find an empty compartment. The three friends put their trunks into the compartment and settled down to wait for the train to take off.

"It's kind of nice not having to worry about the prefect meeting this year," Hermione told them. "We'll all find out who made prefect once we get to school and there will be a meeting then." She had received an owl from Professor McGonagall the day before with that info. "I wonder who they will choose for prefects. I heard the Board of Governors' had to get involved again and that's why it took so long."

"I'm sure your badge will be reinstated Hermione," Neville told her with a smile. "You have the highest grades in the year and have one of the best records as you have only ever had one detention and that was in 1st year."

"The reason they had to redo everything was because of people like Ron and Malfoy who never deserved their badges to begin with and then abused them." Harry reminded her. "I'm guessing that you and Neville will get it for our year and that Colin will be the new 5th year prefect but I don't know any of the 5th year girls to determine who deserves it."

"I am sure that Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff will all stay the same," Hermione said and they agreed. "Except they may decide to choose Justin over Ernie as he gets along much better with the rest of their housemates. Slytherin will be Blaise Zabini and Millicent Bultstrode if they go by grades and who doesn't get in trouble."

"That's why Nev here will get the badge before me. I mean really I cause the most trouble in our year and I don't plan on stopping this year if Dumbles keeps acting like he does." Harry said with a smirk and the other two laughed.

They were joined a few minutes later by Luna Lovegood who came in dragging her trunk. "Hey Luna! Did you have a nice summer?" Neville asked and helped her put her trunk up.

"Yes, daddy and I went hunting for Crumple Horned Snorkaks but were not able to find any. We did find a few Nargles and even managed to get a few pictures of mating Hoozlewickets. I just got back yesterday and barely had time to pack for school." She told them as she sat down next to Neville with the latest issue of the Quibbler.

"What classes are you taking?" Hermione asked her, trying to push aside the strangeness of the girl since both Harry and Neville liked her.

"My current classes are Astronomy, Care of Magical Creatures, Charms, DADA, Divination, Herbology, Muggle Studies, Potions, and Transfiguration. I decided to drop History of Magic and just take my OWL at the Ministry. Then I'm adding some of the new classes. I'm going to take Healing & First Aid, Art and German. I already am fluent in the other languages so I hope they add some other choices for next year or maybe I'll try Flying." Luna told them with her normal dreamy look.

"Are you nervous about your OWLs?" Neville asked her. He was taking Charms, DADA, Herbology, Transfiguration, Healing & First Aid, Dueling, Warding, Politics & Law, Flying, Mermish, Centaurian and Elvin as his classes.

"No, I just hope we get some good teachers this year." She said and they all agreed.

"It should be interesting to see who they got to teach all the subjects." Harry commented.

The train was almost full when Dean Thomas popped his head into their compartment. "Where's Ginny?" He asked them with a confused look on his face. "Her last letter said she would meet me once we got on the train. I haven't seen her or Ron, do you think they are running late?"

"Do you not get the Daily Prophet over the summer?" Hermione asked him with a shocked expression on her face.

"Nah, I never read it anyway so why bother?" He asked beginning to get worried.

"Ginny was arrested and has been expelled and is in a muggle juvenile facility." Hermione told him, wondering how many others would be asking the same questions. "She was arrested for having Amorentia as well as for admitting under truth serum to plan on using it to get Harry to fall in love with her once school started."

"Ron was arrested as well but the charges were dropped for the moment," Neville told him. "He was stealing from Harry so we don't really care where he is."

Dean just stared at them as if expecting them to tell him it was all a big joke. "But... but..." he couldn't come up with anything to say about learning that who he thought was his girlfriend was arrested for trying to drug someone else with a love potion.

"I'm sorry you had to find out like this Dean," Harry told him. "I didn't realize you were that close to Ginny. Ron will be in our dorm still though as he didn't get expelled."

"We were supposedly going out," Dean told them and they all were surprised, having assumed Ginny's comment on the train ride home had just been a lie to get Ron mad and Harry jealous. "I can't believe

she would be capable of something like that. Are you sure she knew what she was doing?"

"We were there for the questioning," Hermione told him gently. "She knew exactly what the potion was, what it does and how illegal it was to use. She admitted to a lot of other things we never thought her capable of as well. Ron and his mum were involved in a lot of it as well and all three have been disowned from the Weasley family."

Dean just nodded and headed off silently back to the compartment he was in with Seamus, Lavender and the Patil twins.

"Hi Harry!" Colin Creevy said as he entered their carriage after the train had left the station. "A bunch of us were wondering if you were going to start the DA again?"

"Kind of Colin," Harry told him with a smile at the energetic 5th year. "I am going to start a dueling club where we can all learn new spells as well as practice dueling outside of the new dueling class. I'm calling it the Dueling Association so we can still call it the DA. It's going to be open to anyone but I'm going to run it with help from the new Dueling professor."

"Cool! I can't wait to start! The new classes are great; I'm taking Dueling, Healing and Art!" He told them and hurried out so fast they didn't even have time to say bye.

"It's like he has a permanent caffeine high," Hermione said with a shrug. "It won't take long for word to spread about the DA now at least. I bet a bunch more people stop by before we get to school to ask you about it."

She was right as people stopped in throughout the ride to say how they did on their OWLs or to ask about the DA. They were rarely alone in their compartment with how many visitors they had.

"So Potter you finally ditched the blood traitors I see," Malfoy drawled from the doorway. Harry rolled his eyes at Neville who was trying to hide a smirk as Harry had just commented on how nice the trip was going without their annual visit from the ferret.

"Blood traitors no, traitors yes." Harry said calmly. "But at least Ron is not in prison like your dear old dad." Harry had wondered why Lucius was still in prison. It seemed that he was either incapable of buying his way out or Voldie didn't care enough about him to rescue him.

Draco flinched at the mention of his father and turned and left them be. The friends all traded looks at how he just left and wondered what it was about. "Do you think his dad is out and he's not supposed to brag or do you think maybe he's glad his dad is still in jail?" Harry asked looking thoughtfully out the door.

"Well if his dad is anything like mine then maybe he is just relieved to be rid of him." Hermione said quietly. She was slowly coming to terms with how her father treated her and was even able to speak of it to those she trusted.

"Maybe he's not as loathsome as we have been led to believe. He never has really done too much more than harmless name calling and tattling. We should give him a chance and see if he really is a junior death eater or if he has just been acting like his daddy expected him to." Harry said and they all agreed.

"We should invite a few Slytherins to the first DA meeting," Neville suggested. "Start working on house unity and winning them away from Moldyshorts."

"The girls in my year would probably be interested," Luna said and offered to invite them when she was in class with them. There were 4 girls her age and none of them were ever too mean to anyone so they would be a good choice.

"We should invite whoever is chosen as prefects as well," Hermione said and they all agreed that it was time to try and put an end to the almost war between Gryffindor and Slytherin Houses.

They had just finished changing into their school robes when Dean and Seamus walked in. "I saw Ron. I guess his name is Ron Grant now. He was being all smug and saying how he was of course going

to be prefect again and how Dumbledore had promised him that he would be Quidditch captain as well.” Dean told them with a grimace.

“He was acting like none of us had any idea what he had been caught doing to you and pretending that everything was just the same as before. I just wanted to punch him when I finished reading what the Prophet wrote about him.” Seamus told them. “I’m sorry what he did to you Harry and I’m even sorrier that I was such a prat to you last year as well. Do you think you can forgive me?”

“Sure thing,” Harry said with a smile. “I understand that you would believe your mum over me so no hard feelings. Just please next time get the real story from me first ok?”

“Deal,” Seamus said and they waved and headed back to their compartment and the gossip center of the train.

“So Ron and Molly chose a new last name,” Harry said. “I wonder if he’ll choose to get re-sorted since he has a new name and family?”

“I doubt it,” Hermione said. “I would bet a fortune that if he chose to he’d be sorted into Slytherin and there is no way he’d want to go there.”

“Yeah, we’re probably stuck with the jerk.” Neville said. “Too bad we can’t kick him out of the dorms.”

“It should be interesting to see if he can even pass any of his classes without Hermione helping him with his homework.” Harry said.

“No one else will be likely to even talk to him after everything he did to you Harry,” Luna told them. “He’ll be an outcast among the school. The Slytherins will pick on him and the other houses will either help or ignore it.”

“He deserves it though so I won’t stick up for him. Maybe after all of that he will realize he was wrong and eventually become a good person.” Harry said and they agreed that they would not be doing anything to protect Ron from any pranks or taunting.

The train rolled into the station and they headed out to the carriages. Hermione was the only one of their group that couldn't see the thestrals; the other three each gave the ones pulling their carriage a pat before climbing in. The ride up to the castle was quiet as they thought about the changes that would be occurring that year.

Harry smiled in contentment as the castle he considered home came into view. He always loved the first look at the castle each year. He had never felt as safe and content as he did in the old school. This summer had almost come close but that was more for the company he was in and not for the location. He just hoped this year would end better than the last and that he wouldn't have any trying adventures. He knew there would never be a normal year inside the magical castle, but he was hoping for a calm one.

Chapter 2: Heir of Hogwarts

The teachers were all sitting in their places awaiting the students arrival when they felt a change in the castle. Dumbledore and McGonagall noticed it the most being tied to the wards as Headmaster and Deputy. The castle seemed to come to life more, it seemed excited. Albus looked concerned with the castle's reaction as most of the other professors noticed but McGonagall just smiled as if she knew something they all did not.

Harry and his friends climbed out of their carriage and made their way to the doors into the castle. As Harry stepped over the threshold he felt a wave of magic wash over him. He paused as the magic seeped into him and then smiled at his friends, eyes sparkling brightly. The castle had just welcomed him home. The castle was partially sentient and had recognized the heir of her creators and welcomed him back. She imparted in him long lost knowledge of the castle and grounds as well as gave him access to the wards and knowledge of how to talk to her.

Hermione and Neville could both tell that something had just happened to their friend but when they saw him smile they knew it was alright. "Hogwarts was just saying hello," Harry whispered to them with another smile as they made their way into the Great Hall. Hermione grinned at him as she had read about the castle and how it reacted to the heirs of the founders and knew that Harry would now have more protection from the meddling headmaster.

The friends looked at the expanded head table to see who all the new professors were. Neville chuckled as they saw that all the new professors had their hoods up so as to not give away their identity until they were announced. "That one is Bill Weasley," he pointed out as they followed where he was looking and saw the long red hair peeking out of the hood.

"What do you bet he has most of the 5th, 6th and 7th year girls throwing themselves at him by the end of the first week?" Hermione asked with an evil smirk. "You guys thought the girls liked Lockhart wait until you see how they react to him."

“Are you including yourself in that statement?” Harry asked and they laughed knowing that Hermione thought of Bill more as an older brother and was past the stage of having crushes on her professors.

“I bet Lavender makes a pass at him before the end of the feast,” Neville said and nodded down the table where she and Parvati were whispering and peering up at the main table.

“I almost feel sorry for him,” Harry said and they laughed again as they looked Bill’s way, making the new professor worried they were planning on pranking him.

“Should I be worried that they are looking this way, laughing and plotting?” Bill asked the professor next to him who looked at the three at the Gryffindor table and chuckled himself.

“Well, I’m assuming they know it’s you and are trying to get under your skin... or they are plotting something and there is nothing you can do to stop it.” The person told him, his smirk hidden by the hood. “Besides once the rest of us are revealed they will have more than one person to plot against and at least they knew you would be here.”

After the sorting hat finished placing the new 1st years into their houses Dumbledore stood up for his usual start of term announcements. “Welcome back to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. There have been a few modifications to our current curriculum and we will now be offering more course choices for those of you in 3rd year and above. Joining our staff this year to teach the new course of Dueling will be Professor Tonks, who is on loan from the Auror division of the Ministry of Magic.” Tonks stood up, took her hood off and waved to everyone. Her hair was bright purple and many of the students stared in disbelief at her. “Also joining our staff this year to teach Warding is Professor Weasley who until recently was employed as a curse breaker for Gringotts.” Bill took off his hood and waved as well. Harry and Neville both snorted at the sighs and goo-goo eyes he received from over half the females.

“Professor Lambert will be teaching those who signed up for the new course Politics & Law. He is a distinguished member of the Wizengamot and I expect you will all treat him with the respect his

position deserves.” Dumbledore said before moving on. “Professor Vance will be taking over History of Magic as well as the newly offered teaching course.” There was very loud applause at the mention that she would be taking over for Binns who no one was able to learn from. Harry was just surprised that so far 3 of the 4 new teachers were all Order members.

“Professor Emeris will be teaching the new Art course as well as the Elvin language course. Anyone who wishes studio space to work on art or other crafts should see Professor Emeris for a schedule and location.” Harry smiled as he recognized Emeris as one of the examiners from his OWL for Fine Arts and had also seen him in the Magical Craftmanship exam. Harry was just glad they were able to find someone to cover such a broad subject.

“We have two additional additions to the staff. Professor Figg will be taking over muggle studies as well as offering an introductory course for 1st and 2nd year muggleborn or muggle raised students to familiarize them with the wizarding world. Please see your head of house if you are interested in attending the Introduction to Wizardry course.” Dumbledore said and it was easy to tell that he was not happy about having to replace his muggle studies professor with someone who actually knew about the muggle world.

“Our last addition to the staff is returning Professor Lupin who will be filling the once again vacant post of Defense Against the Dark Arts.” Whatever else Dumbledore wanted to say was momentarily drowned out by the loud cheering for Remus who just smiled and waved at them.

“The rest of the professors will remain teaching their current subjects. Professor Sinestra will also take over the language courses of French, Spanish and German. Professor McGonagall will be teaching Gaelic, Professor Vector will be teaching Latin, Professor Hagrid will be teaching Giant, Professor Firenze will be teaching Centaurian, and I will be teaching Mermish and Fairy. Madame Pomfrey will be teaching the Healing & First Aid course and Madame Hooch will be teaching the Flying course as well as overseeing some of the newly created athletic clubs. Postings of new clubs and activities are on the boards in the common rooms.”

Harry sent a glare at Remus for not telling him he would be their new DADA professor. "Ok, 5 of the 7 new professors are Order members and we only knew about Bill. I say that calls for a little payback Marauder style."

"I'm in, do you have any good ideas or should we owls the twins?" Neville asked, sending a smirk in the direction of the head table.

"I don't think it's fair just to prank the new teachers..." Hermione said with a devious little smile. "I mean the current members of the Order knew they were coming as well."

"Yes, so we add Snape, McGonagall, Hagrid, Flitwick, Sprout and Pomfrey to the list as well!" Harry said and the three spent the rest of dinner with their heads together plotting revenge on the Professors. "It's my right as Head of the Order to be informed of things as important as this, so they should have told me and this is just my way of reminding them." Harry reasoned when Hermione asked what he thought the fallout would be.

"Have we figured out a way to test Snape's allegiances yet?" Neville asked watching his least favorite professor sneer at anyone looking in his direction. They had determined that no truth serums would work against the potions master and that he was a skilled enough Occlumens and Legilimens that he could theoretically trick even Fawkes.

"No," Harry said sourly. "So far he is still considered a member but does not have access to Headquarters and his only contact is Mad-Eye until we determine who he really works for. I was hoping to have a talk with him sometime to see if I can get him to volunteer the reasons why we should believe him."

"I'm sure that will be pleasant," Neville said sarcastically and the three laughed and finished eating their meals.

"They will have to announce Prefects after dinner at least so they can lead the 1st years. I wonder if they will announce the Heads and the

Captains then as well?" Hermione said as she noticed that most the students were done with their meals.

Professor McGonagall stood to address the students and Harry noticed with amusement that Dumbledore seemed to be pouting. "As many of you know there have been some discrepancies with the awarding of the Prefect, Head and Captain positions and the Board of Governors reviewed each current and potential candidate before determining the best choices. Just because someone was a prefect or team captain a previous year does not mean they will be now." She told them and Harry was sure she glared at Ron and Draco when she said it.

"This year's Head Boy is Ravenclaw Tony Stewart and this year's Head Girl is Hufflepuff Tonya Thompson." She said and motioned for the two to come up and receive their badges to the applause of the student body. They were two 7th years that were nice to everyone in the school and had top marks. She began to announce the prefects next starting with the 7th years. "The 6th year prefects from Slytherin House are Blaise Zabini and Millicent Bullstrode," she said and there was a lot of applause, even from the Slytherins, that Draco and Pansy had not gotten their badges back. "From Ravenclaw House Terry Boot and Lisa Turpin, from Hufflepuff House Justin Finch-Fletchly and Susan Bones and from Gryffindor House Neville Longbottom and Hermione Granger Black." Harry just grinned at his friends with an 'I told you so' look on his face as they went up to get their badges. Luna was named the female Ravenclaw 5th year prefect and Colin Creevy was the new male Gryffindor 5th year prefect.

"Quidditch Captains will be announced tomorrow at breakfast. Prefects please lead the 1st years to the dorms. There will be a meeting following breakfast tomorrow for prefects and captains to explain your duties. Now off to bed all of you and pleasant dreams." McGonagall said with a slight smile as the prefects started calling for the 1st years to follow them.

"So Harry are you going to hold a mass tryout for the team this year or just for the open positions?" Seamus asked him as they were all

unpacking. Unfortunately Ron had walked in right then and heard the question.

“Why are you asking him, he’s not even on the team so he definitely won’t be captain? I’ll be captain, Dumbledore already told me so.” Ron said pompously. “I don’t think I’ll be having tryouts except for seeker as we will need a new one of those.”

“And two chasers since Angie and Alicia graduated,” Dean said rolling his eyes. “Unless you think Katie can handle it all by herself.”

“Sure she can,” Harry said with a smile. “And I bet she makes captain since she’s been on the team the longest. Although I thought she told Angie last year that she wasn’t interested since she doesn’t plan on going professional anyway.”

“Are you going to play professionally Harry?” Seamus asked, none of them really paying any attention to Ron.

“Like he’s good enough, hah!” Ron commented spitefully, hating how they were not even paying attention to him.

“Harry already has offers from 5 different pro teams but he told them they would have to wait until he graduated so he could still play for Hogwarts,” Neville told Seamus. “You should have seen him playing in the charity match at The Farm, it was great! He was up against Victor Krum and an entire team of pros that play for their National team and The Farm team beat them, proving why the trainers from The Farm are top notch.”

“You were at the charity match?” Seamus asked with envy of Neville. “That means you were at The Farm too! What kind of camp were you there for and are you trying out for the team this year?” They all ignored Ron’s scoff at the idea of Neville trying out.

“I was at the announcer camp; Harry was there at the same time for the Seeker Special Session. It was amazing! I am already trying to convince my gran to let me go next summer as well. I think I might actually go their beginner Quidditch camp next time to work on my flying a bit more.” Neville told them all excitedly. “I have to talk to

McGonagall tomorrow about the announcer spot and if she is having tryouts to fill it or just picking someone.”

“Just what we need to distract us from the game is you stuttering into the microphone,” Ron said meanly to Neville.

“What is your problem Ron?” Harry finally asked, not liking how he was treating all of them. “You’ve done nothing but be rude and insulting since you walked in here!”

“You’re my problem Potter, thinking your so special. You won’t be allowed back on the team when I’m captain just so you know. Just because everyone thinks you’re their savior doesn’t give you the right to dictate other people’s lives! My sister is in jail because of you and my father doesn’t even recognize me as part of the family anymore and it is all your fault!” Ron screamed.

“No Ron it is your fault, Ginny’s fault, your mum’s fault and Dumbledore’s fault. I had nothing to do with how you were paid behind my back to spy on me, with money stolen from my vault. It’s not my fault that your sister planned on using a highly illegal love potion on me. I have done nothing to you but be your friend and keep you out of jail, so just watch who you’re screaming at Mr. Grant.” Harry said with a very hard look on his face. “Remember that you are on your last chance and I promise I will not give you another one!”

The four non red heads in the room all decided to turn in for the night and went to their respective beds while Ron fumed and stormed out of the room and up to the Headmasters office to complain.

The next morning they all left before Ron, none of them bothering to wake him like they had for the past 5 years. Hermione joined the 4 boys in the common room and they headed to the great hall discussing what a prat Ron was. They were stopped by the headmaster as soon as they entered the hall.

“I am very disappointed in you boys for tormenting your fellow housemate last night. Just because he has a new last name does not give you the right to make fun of him. That will be 5 points off Gryffindor for each of you and a detention with Professor Weasley

since it was his brother you were insulting.” Dumbledore told them sternly. He was about to turn away when McGonagall walked over followed by a smug Hermione who hurried after her head of house as soon as Dumbledore approached Harry.

“Just what is the problem here Headmaster?” She said briskly and noticed the looks of contempt each of the boys were giving Albus.

“Just the headmaster playing favorites again Professor,” Harry told her. “He was deducting points and assigning detention for something that never happened.”

“Now now Harry, you know as well as I that you were rude to Mr. Grant last night and you deserve the punishment handed out.” Albus said all grandfatherly twinkles.

“Ron interrupted a private conversation between Seamus and myself talking about the potential Gryffindor Quidditch team and then proceeded to belittle myself, Katie Bell and then to outright insult Neville. He stated that you had promised he would be the Gryffindor Captain and that he wouldn’t let me on the team no matter what. Additionally, he then began to scream that everything that happened with him and his sister was my fault. Like I could have known you were paying them with money stolen from me or that she was planning on drugging me with illegal love potion.” Harry said loudly, his words carrying to every corner of the great hall. “Now which part of that deserved 5 points off from each of us as well as detention with Professor Weasley, who by the way has no relation to Ron since he was disowned for being a disgrace to the rest of the respected Weasley family.”

“You boys go eat, your detention is removed and the points will be reinstated,” McGonagall told them before sending a glare at Albus and heading back to her now cold breakfast at the head table.

“I will need to see you in my office after breakfast Harry,” Dumbledore told him.

“I’m afraid Headmaster that I will not be alone with you. I will need both Auror Tonks and Professor Lupin present as advisors for any

meeting you insist upon as is my right as Lord Potter Black. I also did not give you leave to use my first name so please refrain from doing so Headmaster and refer to me by my correct title, thank you.” Harry said knowing how dangerous it would be to be alone with the manipulative old man. “Additionally, unless the meeting pertains to my education here at Hogwarts, we have nothing that needs discussed in private and even school matters should be handled by my Head of House unless they are of such grave offence to warrant a visit with the Headmaster. Since classes have not even begun, I sincerely doubt that I have done anything grievous enough to warrant such a meeting. If such a thing does occur then I demand, as is my right, to have my advisors present during such a meeting.” Harry said and smiled as Dumbledore just stormed back up to the head table.

“Well you told him Lord Potter,” Dean said trying hard not to laugh as they all made their way to their places at the table.

“Albus! What were you thinking trying to punish my students without consulting me first! Not to mention assigning a detention before school even starts.” Minerva fumed as he sat down in his spot next to her. “You would do well to remember that Lord Potter has powerful connections and you are not on the Board of Governors’ good list right now. Just leave the boy alone.”

“Harry is needed to win this war and he will soon come to realize that he needs my help to do so,” Albus said seemingly unconcerned. “I am the only one who can mold him into who he needs to be to fight Voldemort.”

“You’ve done a poor job of helping the boy this far,” she said with a glare. “I don’t understand how spying on him and stealing his money is molding him into a good fighter. Anything that you need to say to Lord Potter you can go through me, as his Head of House I demand you follow proper protocols or I will be forced to take this matter to the Board myself.” With that said she turned to Pomona Sprout next to her and ignored the Headmaster for the rest of breakfast.

Madame Hooch stood up after breakfast. “Good morning students!” She said happily as everyone quieted down to listen to her. “This year I am insisting that each captain hold an open tryout for every position

on the team. I am also insisting that each house have a full reserve team along with their starters so these tryouts are quite necessary. Just because someone was on the team the previous year or is friends with the captain will not be grounds for making the team as I and a few other impartial observers will be watching the tryouts. To facilitate this rebuilding year we will have a two day Quidditch Workshop next weekend. The owner of The Farm Quidditch Training Facility has offered the use of some of their staff to come and oversee the workshop and work with anyone willing to learn and work hard.” She said and the applause was thunderous.

“Additionally there will be a short match-up between the one of the all-star camp teams and the Farm staff that will be here helping out. This match will be another charity event for the ‘Save the Snidget’ fund and an exclusive for Hogwarts students. A one Galleon entry fee donation will be charged to each participant. If you have any questions about the workshop I will be happy to see you during my office hours. Participation in the workshop is open to anyone, any year and will not affect your ability to try out for your house team.” Hooch was in her element and couldn’t wait to show off her students to her sister when she came to visit.

“Now on to what you have been waiting for... Your House team captains!” She said and waited until the cheers died down. “Starting with Hufflepuff house we have 6th year Ernie Macmillan! Ravenclaw house is 7th year Cho Chang! Slytherin house is 6th year Draco Malfoy!” She had to pause for all the boos and hollering to die down at Draco’s smug smirk. “And for Gryffindor house we have 6th year Harry Potter!” She said and then handed them each their badge.

“What!” Yelled Ron loudly. “How can Potter be captain he’s not even on the team! That badge should be mine!”

“Shut your mouth Mr. Grant,” Madame Hooch said with a distasteful look on her face. “Mr. Potter was unjustly taken from the team in the middle of last season but has been a member longer than all but Miss Bell who has indicated that she did not want the position. Additionally I have been informed by Angelina Johnson that she was forced to put you on the team last year by Headmaster Dumbledore despite the fact that you were not the best choice for the position. You were

never even considered for the position of captain once the decision was taken out the Headmaster's hands." Hooch sent a smug look at Albus daring him to dispute everything she had just said. The Headmaster had very few friends left on the staff and most were wondering what he was still doing as Headmaster after what he did to Harry.

"Now will the prefects and Quidditch captains please remain behind, the rest of you may go. Schedules will be handed out at lunchtime for classes tomorrow." McGonagall said and most of the students cleared out of the great hall.

Harry was still sitting next to Hermione and Neville when he noticed that Ernie and Cho had sat down next to them. "We heard you were at the Farm this summer," Ernie said enviously. "Do you think the workshop will really help?"

"Sure, the trainers from the Farm are the best in the world. We're lucky they are willing to come help us. I think having full tryouts are what should be done every year, that way you always have the best team possible." Harry told them.

"When do you want to hold your tryouts?" Cho asked. "With full tryouts it will take at least a full day so we will have to coordinate weekends."

"I will need longer than that as I need to build up my team from scratch, there is no one else left." Draco Malfoy said from behind them and they all turned to the blonde shocked that he was being so polite.

"You should make sure that everyone thinking of trying out attends the workshop then. The trainers should be able to help them hone their skill if they have any. If you can watch some of them at the workshop and start building up your opinions then so you won't need to watch them as much in the tryout." Harry offered and noticed that everyone else was looking at him like he was nuts for giving advice to Malfoy.

"You could also hold some practice sessions throughout the week after classes to give your hopefuls some more practice time," Cho suggested.

"Yeah and then we can each have a day to try out our teams over the two following weekends." Ernie said. "Maybe Madame Hooch can just draw names for who gets Saturday and who gets Sunday for each of the two weekends."

"Works for me," Harry said with a shrug and the four captains agreed before sitting down to listen to Professor McGonagall, none of them realizing they had all migrated over to sit at the Gryffindor table to listen to the Quidditch players.

After the meeting was over and they all had their rules, responsibilities and in the prefects case their patrol schedules, everyone headed out of the great hall. Harry and his friends were still talking when Harry noticed Malfoy waiting patiently next to them.

"May I have a moment of your time Lord Black?" He asked formally and Harry knew this had to do with more than their petty school grudge.

"Certainly cousin, would you prefer to meet in private?" Harry asked referring to him in family terms since that was how Draco started it. Draco nodded and indicated that Hermione should attend as well. The three of them headed out of the great hall and Harry took them to the ROR so they could talk in private without Dumbles listening in.

"What can the Head of the Black family do for you today Draco?" Harry asked once they were seated.

Draco took a deep breath, steeling himself for what he was about to ask. "I humbly request asylum from the House of Black. My mother, formerly Narcissa Black and myself are in grave danger from my father Lord Lucius Malfoy. As a member of the House of Black I beseech you to protect my mother and myself."

Harry and Hermione just stared in shock at the boy before them. They had never expected such a thing from the Malfoy heir. "Draco,

please tell me more of what this is about. I am not turning down your request I just ask for more clarification. More accurately I need you to understand that if I grant your request you would be under my care and have to do as I say.” Harry said still trying to understand what his once nemesis was up to.

Draco sighed, knowing there was no way to get them to help him without telling them everything. “It’s a long story but I will tell it.” He said and sat back with his head in his hands. “I guess it starts shortly after my parents wedding. My mother was promised to my father in an arranged marriage. She was brought up in a dark but not evil household and did not oppose the match as the Malfoys were a powerful and influential family, not as much so as the Blacks at the time, but close. Now my father did not want a wife who could think for herself or was anything other than a beautiful woman to stand at his side. When my mother expressed an opinion on anything she was yelled at or even beaten and locked in her rooms. When she threatened to tell her family what Lucius was like he placed her under the Imperius curse for the first time.” Draco paused as Hermione gasped in horror at what a life lived under the Imperius would be like.

“When my mother became pregnant my father was livid because the baby was not a boy and did not register as extraordinarily powerful.” Draco continued and Harry began to get an idea of what life at Malfoy manor was really like. “He forced her to terminate the pregnancy, as well as two subsequent pregnancies resulting in girls. As you can imagine my mother was devastated each time as well as not being given the chance to properly grieve or heal before he began trying for a male heir again. He used the Cruciatus curse on her for the first time when she lost my older brother when she was just 4 months along. This time he did allow a healer to see to her, who was able to heal the damage from all the terminated pregnancies as well. I was conceived 6 months later and although I was a boy I was deemed not powerful enough. My father, fearing I was the only boy she would bare, decided to let me live and continue to try for a more powerful heir. My mother was allowed to raise me until I was 5 years old and then I was moved from the nursery and began my education with my father. I was only allowed to see my mother at meals or other public functions. I was not allowed to show any positive emotions, not allowed to cry in public or make any comment or noise without my

fathers permission.” Draco paused to take a deep breath and Harry began to wonder if perhaps growing up with the Dursleys was not so bad.

“He gave me my first wand when I was 7 and began teaching me the Dark Arts along with my lessons in etiquette and politics. I was instructed in exactly what a Malfoy heir was entitled to, who was worthy to speak with and especially who was below us and how to treat muggle-borns and blood traitors. Any time I messed up I was beaten or cursed. He did not start using Imperio on me until after I wrote home that you turned down my hand of friendship. He came to the school that same night and placed the curse on me to make sure I acted like I was supposed to and to make sure I was horrible to you. I was supposed to do anything in my power to get you expelled.” Draco said and Harry nodded in understanding at the instant animosity between them.

“In the meantime my mother was forced to terminate 4 more pregnancies for girls were unacceptable to him. I was punished by being cursed with Crucio every break and holiday for not beating your marks Hermione or beating you in Quidditch Harry. The Imperius was not broken until after his trial when they snapped his wand this summer. My mother and I spent the summer discussing our options, especially once it was revealed that you were the new Lord Black. My father no longer has access to the Malfoy vaults as he is in prison and that is why he has not been able to buy his way out. But my mother heard from her crazy sister Bellatrix that the Dark Lord would soon be breaking his followers out of prison. That is why I ask for your protection now. I cannot allow myself to be placed back under my father’s control and my mother is pregnant once again and I do not wish to loose another sister.” Draco finished looking defeated just for having told them his story.

Harry and Hermione were horrified at what Lucius Malfoy would do to his own family. “What would you have me do?” Harry asked curiously.

“The best thing would be to void their marriage contract for breach of contract since he used an unforgivable curse against her. As he used it against me you can either recall me to the family as a Black or you can fight for me in the Wizengamot to take over as Head of Malfoy

since he tried to end his own line by terminating all my mothers' pregnancies." Draco told them and they both nodded knowing those were options.

"What I mean is what do you want to do now?" Harry asked. "Do you want me to bring your mother here to keep her safe or put her up someplace with a Fidelius charm? Do you want to stay in school here or do you want to transfer overseas away from his influence? Do you want to remain a Malfoy or revert to being a Black? The choice is yours at this point Draco as there is no doubt I will help you in any way you desire. No one deserves to be treated like you were."

"With everything I have said and done to both of you over the years you will help me just like that?" Draco asked incredulously.

"Not just like that," Harry said. "If you wish my help in the Wizengamot you will have to prove you want nothing to do with the Dark Lord, you will have to work on your attitude towards muggle-born and half-bloods. I am not expecting you to instantly change your views but I refuse to save you just to hand you over to Voldemort."

"I agree that I am more neutral in this war. I do not despise muggle-borns or half-bloods. I do believe it right to preserve the pureblood lines if possible. I have nothing against muggles in general but I do not want our world revealed to them. I have no problems with most creatures, although Hermione and my view of house elves differ greatly. I will not fight for Dumbledore nor will I fight for the Dark Lord." Draco told them and they nodded that that was something they could agree on.

"I agree with you," Harry told him with a small smile. "I will not fight for Dumbledore but for myself to stop the mindless killing of the Dark Lord. He needs to be stopped and his followers rounded up so they cannot harm people like you and your mother or people like Hermione's mother. But I will not support opening ourselves up to the muggles either as it is too dangerous. Now do you know what you wish so we can head to Gringotts and get it settled before classes tomorrow?"

"I think I would prefer my mother here if possible that way I can be assured of her safety. I worry about Dumbledore's involvement though." Draco said sadly. "I just wish there was a legitimate reason to bring her here so not to alert him."

"There is!" Hermione said suddenly. "I just remembered! Something I read in the Black Family Library. Your grandmother was a priestess, one of the Blessed Priestess actually. That is why her children were all girls; they were destined to become priestess like their mother but were instead married off to the highest bidders or in Andromeda's case ran away. That is why your mother keeps having girls; they are the next generation of priestess for the temple!" Hermione was blabbering without making much sense to the two boys. "Don't you see, your mother will know all about the ways of the priestess and I can hire her as my mentor and tutor to learn my new responsibilities while still in school!"

"Perfect! As Lady Granger and newest Guardian you can request that your mentor attend with you so you do not accidentally skirt your duties while still in school." Harry said happily, "We won't even have to mention that she is under my protection unless needed."

"Can I contact my mother and have her come here immediately?" Draco asked them hopefully. "I am afraid what would happen if my father escapes before then."

"Yes, contact her now and then we will head to Gringotts to finalize everything after lunch." Harry said and was surprised when Draco shook his hand in thanks and even gave Hermione a hug.

"Oh and cousin," Harry said as Draco was almost to the door. "I expect that the stupid Gryffindor/Slytherin rivalry will have ended now? I wish to make friends with those willing in your house; you and I can set an example of what proper behavior at this school should be."

"That works for me as long as I get to kick your butt on the Quidditch field," Draco said and slipped out the door before Harry could comment back.

Chapter 3: Pranking the Professors

Classes started the next day without mishap, unless you counted Ron spouting hurtful comments almost constantly. Harry, Hermione and Neville all had Warding first thing and were joined by Draco, Blaise Zabini and most of the Ravenclaws. There were only 10 students in their year attempting the class. Bill walked in with a grin when he saw all of them.

“Welcome to your first day of Warding. I’m Bill Weasley and you can call me Bill as Professor Weasley makes me sound old! Now only about half of the witches and wizards powerful enough to be enrolled in school are capable of creating wards. It takes a lot of strength, power and concentration to weave even a simple ward. Most wizards are not able to handle more than a few simple wards, all of which are covered in the OWL for this subject. Now more complex wards are covered in the NEWT level testing and only about 25 of those who can do the simple wards can handle the complex ones. I’m telling you this now so that you don’t get upset if you can’t do it. The likelihood that all 10 of you will be able to ward is slim. Now have any of you, other than Harry, studied any warding?”

Blaise and two of the Ravenclaws raised their hands but Blaise was the only one who had ever tried to actually create a ward. Bill then demonstrated some basic warding that would be part of the OWL exam. “The basic household wards consist of 4 different wards and are what you are tested on in your OWLs. The other wards are covered in the theory but you only need to cast the 4 household wards to achieve a passing score of an Acceptable in the practical.” He told them while handing out a booklet of what was needed to pass each level of testing.

“Now most of you will be starting off with these basic wards as the only one with an OWL in the subject currently in the school, other than me and the Headmaster, is Harry here. He achieved an Outstanding in his OWL examination by casting beyond NEWT level wards that even the examiner is unable to cast.” Bill said with an amused smirk. “Harry will be doing mostly independent study in this class as I prepare him for NEWTs rather than the OWLs that you will take.”

The rest of the week went well for the friends as they started all their classes. Harry liked all his classes except for the Fairy language class the Headmaster was teaching as he used every opportunity to try and peek into Harry's mind or talk to him about things other than class as there were only 3 other students in the class. His other language classes were going much better and he was catching on much quicker than the other students. The fact that the class sizes were so small allowed for more one on one instruction and he felt that he could possibly be ready for his language NEWT by the end of the year.

It took the group of friends a few days to set up their prank on the Order member teachers. They had to rework some current spells and combine a few others to get the desired effects. Since Harry was the heir of Hogwarts the house elves were even willing to help them slip the finished powdered potion into the specific professors' breakfast. Harry had made sure to casually mention to Colin that he should make sure he had plenty of film in his camera before they went down to the great hall.

Narcissa Black, formerly Narcissa Malfoy, sat at the head table still shocked that Harry had been willing to help her and that she was actually going to be able to pass her priestess knowledge on to the new Guardian. She had been saddened when she realized that she wouldn't become a priestess like her mother but had never given up the old ways. She watched as Hermione and her friends filed into the room looking overly excited about something. When the kids kept sneaking glances up at the staff table she decided they were definitely up to something and turned to Remus beside her. "Should we be worried that Harry and his friends seem to be plotting something?" She asked him.

"Howlllllllll howl howl howllllll, hooooowlll," Remus replied, sounding like a wolf and not making any sense. He looked innocently at Narcissa as she just stared in shock at him, acting as if he had no idea he just howled at her.

She turned to Emmeline Vance on her other side and asked her if she knew what was wrong with Remus, "Tweet tweeet

twweeeeeeeet,” Professor Vance replied and Narcissa saw that Harry and his friends were now trying to suppress laughter.

“Please tell me that I sound normal to you?” Professor Sinestra asked with a sigh as she leaned around Professor Vance.

“You sound fine to me,” Narcissa replied as they watched the other professors to see if any other ones were affected. “Perhaps we should avoid eating or drinking anything else at the table though incase it’s in the food.”

“Meow, meeeooooow!” McGonagall could be heard to almost be yelling from her place at the head table to the students who were currently laughing at them.

The only non affected teachers left at the table were Hooch, Vector, Sinestra, Lambert and Emeris, although they assumed that Trelawney and Firenze were also unaffected as they were not at breakfast. The students were laughing almost uncontrollably at this point, especially since the affected professors seemed both livid and confused. Harry thought the funniest was Madame Pomfrey who was clucking away like the mother hen he always thought she was.

This first part of the prank caused them to sound like their inner animal, as well as to not realize they were sounding that way and to only hear in English what the other affected professors were saying. That was why they were confused as well as angry as they didn’t understand why the students were laughing and six of the staff looking at them strangely.

Professor McGonagall was obviously a cat, since that was her animagus form and Harry was unsurprised to hear that Mrs. Figg was also some sort of feline. With Poppy as a hen, Vance as some sort of songbird, and Remus sounding like his wolf they made quite the racket. Add in Bill’s lion like roars, Hagrid’s bear like growls, Flitwick’s tiny mouse like squeaks, and Sprouts quiet snuffles it was hard to hear the interesting conversation between the snake like hisses of Snape and the bleating goat noises of Albus. In fact the only affected professor not making noise was Tonks who just turned different colors.

Finally Albus stood to address the students and had to use a voice magnification charm, which just projected disappointed sounding bleats across the hall. This caused even the unaffected staff to start laughing and anyone not laughing in the great hall joined in. "Oh, this will make a lovely pensive memory." Harry laughed along with the rest of them.

Finally Professor Vector gained control of her laughter and addressed the students. "I am not sure which of you is responsible for this rather humorous prank, but please return the affected professors back to normal before their first class. Now I suggest you quickly finish breakfast and head out before the hourglasses begin to understand beast speak for point deductions," she said and sat back down and continued to chuckle at her coworkers.

Harry and his friends hung out in the entry hall waiting for the professors to exit and for the next part of the prank to kick in. As soon as the affected professors left the hall their robes changed to match the coloring of their inner animal. Their hair also changed to match their animal. To Harry Bill was the funniest as he kept his red hair but it fluffed out into an approximation of a lion's mane. Tonks once again didn't change much other than whatever color her face turned, now her hair and robes turned to match.

"She must be some sort of chameleon or something," Hermione commented as they watched their currently mute friend/professor. Snape was the scariest looking as he took on a very reptilian look that was sure to frighten the first years even more than his normal bat like appearance. Professor Sprout was the cutest as her animal was apparently a white fluffy bunny, although Poppy and Professor Vance were interesting with all their feathers.

The students remaining in the hall hurried on to class laughing and spreading the word that there was more to the mornings prank. Harry and his friends chuckled all the way to their first class of the day, which just happened to be DADA. They had timed the prank so that the full voice modification would end as soon as their first class started, well for everyone but Dumbledore who would have to wait out the entire day. The charm would then change into a slight voice

modification where the professor would sometimes use their 'other' voice, especially for voice inflections or filler words and sighing.

Remus entered the classroom and sent a glare at the three he knew were responsible. "Anything you would like to own up to Harry?" He asked and when he saw the disappointed looks on the other students faces he knew that whatever he sounded like at breakfast had worn off, since they could apparently understand him.

"No idea what you are talking about Mooney, I mean Professor Lupin. You do bare a striking resemblance to Mooney today though. A most ingenious prank if I do say so, worthy of the Marauders I think, I'll have to congratulate whoever was responsible for such genius." Harry said sweetly with a smile that caused everyone in the class to KNOW he was responsible even if he claimed not to be.

"I'm just curious what you and the other targeted professors have in common that would cause someone to prank you," Hermione said with a smirk. "I mean not all the professors were affected so there must be some connection between the pranked ones."

"It is strange Hermione," Neville commented with a bored look on his face. "It wasn't just the new professors nor was it just the returning professors."

"That's enough of evaluating the motives of the pranksters," Remus said with a sigh that sounded like a howl and set the class laughing again. This time Remus was able to hear it as well. "So I was howling at breakfast?" He asked them and saw them all nod, trying to contain their mirth. "What did the other professors sound like then?" He asked curiously, remembering the strange changes to their hair and clothing. He had realized he resembled Mooney but he hadn't realized the other professors had taken on their animal traits as well.

"Professor McGonagall sounded like a cat as well as the new Muggle Studies Professor," Seamus told him.

"Professor Sprout is a bunny!" Lavender Brown said excitedly, "And I think Professor Flitwick is a mouse."

“Madame Pomfrey has proven to be the mother hen we always took her for,” Harry added with a laugh.

“Professor Snape seems to be a snake,” Draco Malfoy added from the back where he was sitting with Blaise and Millicent, the only other Slytherins in the class.

“Professor Weasley is a lion,” Padma Patil said with a love struck sigh, sounding remarkably like her sister Parvati who was still laughing too hard to answer any of the questions.

“The new History teacher is some kind of bird; she had blue feathers after leaving the hall.” Susan Bones from Hufflepuff told him.

“Hagrid is a bear of course,” Dean Thomas told him with a grin. “I don’t think the new Dueling Professor said anything though.”

“She appears to be a chameleon or something,” Terry Boot from Ravenclaw suggested and they all agreed.

“And the Headmaster?” Remus asked, trying to hide his amusement at the creativity of the prank.

“Goat,” was all Neville had to say before the three friends were howling with laughter again. It was so funny that Dumbledore really was an old goat that they couldn’t help but laugh. They had not initially planned on including Dumbledore in the prank as he was not an Order member but Harry just couldn’t help himself. Even Remus couldn’t contain his laugh at finding out the Headmaster had been bleating like a goat to the entire great hall.

“Alright, thank you for filling me in on the morning’s events but we must get started with our lesson now.” Remus said and everyone diligently got out their books and parchment to take notes.

The prank on the professors was still hot gossip, even as the first day of the Quidditch Workshop loomed closer. That morning Harry had received a howler at breakfast from the Weasley twins that only stated, “We’re not worthy,” over and over again, much to the amusement of those that realized that Harry was responsible for the

prank on the professors, even if they couldn't prove it. Hedwig arrived with a box full of pranking supplies with an actual letter from the twins congratulating him on getting the professors and especially Dumbledore, a feat they had never accomplished.

Tonk, Bill and Remus had immediately known that the prank was payback for them not telling Harry they would be working at Hogwarts. As the professors affected, other than Albus, were all Order members. They had decided that they were let off relatively easy as they should have informed Harry since he was the head of the Order. The fact that he made the Headmaster sound like a goat the entire day was worth having been pranked themselves.

Professor McGonagall held the three after class to discuss their prank. "Now I know we cannot prove that any of you were responsible for that prank so you will not get in trouble for it." She told them with a small smile. "I wanted to discuss how you were able to get the traits of the person's inner animal to manifest so wonderfully. It is a very ingenious transfiguration and I believe it would be helpful in helping those interested in the animagus transformation with determining their animal and seeing if they are still wanting to transform." She told them proudly and they spent the next half hour explaining how they got the traits to manifest.

Minerva was impressed with the ingenuity of her students and realized that with the three of them working together they could give the Mauraders a run for their money. She had to be very strict with Albus to keep him from punishing Harry since there had been no actual proof of his involvement. The headmaster had been livid that he had first of all been pranked, second of all been humiliated in front of the entire school, and third that the students now knew his inner animal was just a stupid goat.

The only other professor who was upset about the prank was Snape who was just upset on principle. He was madder at himself for falling victim to it than upset with the results. He had never been very good at transfiguration and hadn't known what his inner animal was until that point. He was actually relieved that he was such a scary serpent. He had terrified three first years to the point of tears with his hissing personality and looks the day of the prank. The only reason he was

still upset was that he knew Potter was responsible and that there was no proof and therefore no way to punish the arrogant boy.

Chapter 4: Quidditch Workshop

The 15 strong staff from the Farm was due to arrive and the entire student body was lined up in front of the castle to welcome them. It was Friday after classes and everyone was looking forward to the weekend's activities. They arrived in 4 carriages from their portkey landing zone at the train station. They would be staying until after dinner on Sunday. Mike Butler was the first one out of the carriage and put most of the students at ease with his friendly smile. Ilma Hooch followed him out of the carriage and hurried over to hug her sister as the rest of them piled out, all their equipment was being brought up by the 4 Farm house elves they had brought with them to make sure everything was handled properly.

"Welcome to Hogwarts," Dumbledore said once their visitors were in front of them. "I am Headmaster Albus Dumbledore," and he proceeded to introduce the heads of house as well as Madame Hooch and Madame Pomfrey.

"It's great to be here," Mike said shaking Albus' hand. "I have heard a lot about this place from some of my staff as well as quite a bit from different pro players and campers over the years." He then used a sonorous charm and introduced his staff to all the students before everyone headed in for dinner.

Harry was quickly accosted by Ken Phillips who made him promise to introduce him to the Dueling Professor. Mike also pulled him aside and introduced him to Kelley Baker, their Nutritionist who would be holding wellness classes and giving free meal plans while she was there. He also introduced Larry Swanson who was the new Coaching instructor. Larry was formerly the coach for two different American teams as well as for the US National Team and decided he liked the idea of settling down at the Farm more than traveling all over. Harry had met everyone else before and hurried into the hall before anyone thought he was being given special treatment.

Oliver, Ken, Ashley Price and David Church were seated at the Gryffindor table. Mike and Ilma were the only ones seated at the head table and the rest were scattered about the other tables getting quizzed by eager students. "Are you Hermione Granger?" Ashley

asked the girl sitting next to Harry. At her nod she smiled. "I'm Ashley Prince, the flying instructor for the Farm. I promised Victor Krum that I would tell you hello and apologize for him for not writing you often enough."

"Oh, you're his girlfriend!" Hermione realized happily. "He says such nice things about you in his occasional letters." The two girls spent the rest of the meal getting to know each other, earning Hermione strange glances from those wondering what she was talking about with a Quidditch player for so long.

"So Neville did you get the announcer gig?" Oliver asked his fellow Gryffindor.

"I don't know yet," he said with a shrug. "Professor McGonagall was going to wait until after the workshop. She said anyone wanting the job could announce some of the different training and she would decide then."

"Sounds fair but you were one of the best at the camp so I'm sure you'll be chosen," David said with a grin. "With you announcing the Krum/Potter head to head I wouldn't even be surprised if you were given offers from pro teams after graduation. I heard those recordings are going for astronomical prices and are the hardest sought after in years." Neville just grinned at the shocked looks coming from those who hadn't known he had gone to the Farm.

Everyone was handed a schedule of the workshops being offered over the next two days. Any student was eligible to participate. First years could attend as well if they showed skill otherwise were requested to stick to the beginner workshops. Harry was impressed with the schedule as it was jam packed with activities starting at 8:30 am all the way until 9 pm. They opened the day at 8:30 with either a warm-up flying session at the pitch or with a rules/game overview in the great hall for any not exactly sure what Quidditch was on Saturday and Sunday offered a workshop on what the responsibilities of a captain are to the team which was open to anyone, not just captains. From 9-11 both days there were separate workshops for each position. At the same time Saturday there was an announcers' workshop and Sunday would have a beginner's workshop covering

basic flying and then basic moves and cover a bit of each position. A broom care class was offered each day from 11-12, with a Strategy and Game Tactics seminar offered Sunday at the same time.

After lunch from 1-3 there were 3 different workshops being held each day: broom design, in-depth rules and intermediate flying. Mock/Pick-up games began Saturday from 3-6 with many different games to rotate the players. During the mock games there would be beginner flying from 4-5 and advanced flying from 5-6. Sunday would have advanced flying as well as a class on 'How to Become a Referee' from 3-4. The charity match would be from 4-6 pm between the Farm players and the reigning Amateur camp champs (who just happen to be all former Gryffindors).

After dinner each night would be an hour long meet and greet where the Farm staff would be available to answer questions. Saturday after dinner the Farm staff would be meeting with all 4 team captains and Madame Hooch to discuss tryouts and the upcoming season. After the meet and greet on Sunday there would be an hour long seminar on 'How to Become a Pro' for anyone interested in trying out in the future. There were also going to be 4 nutrition classes offered, Saturday 10-11, 11-12, 3-4 and Sunday 3-4 as well as Kelley being available the rest of the time for one-on-one advice as well as offering meal plans and diet plans. They would set up a broom obstacle course near the lake that Maggie Smith would man all day both days. They also brought a large selection from their gift shop that Maggie would run at the same time. She was one of the part-time counselors and was actually grateful they had picked her to come, even if she did have a tedious job.

There was perfect weather Saturday morning when Harry and all current/returning players headed out to the pitch for the warm-up fly. The rest of the great hall all seemed to remain for the Rules/Game overview and the captains hoped that would spurn a lot more people into wanting to tryout as well as get interested in the rest of the activities. Even Hermione seemed excited to learn more about the game her best friends were so obsessed with. She had agreed to go with Neville to everything he was planning on attending over the next two days and promised to give flying her best shot.

After the warm up they were joined by a bunch more potential players on the pitch where they were separated by position. Harry, Draco and Cho were joined by Megan Jones the Hufflepuff seeker as well as about 8 others that hoped to make the reserve teams, including Dennis Creevy. They were the smallest group on the field since all 4 teams had returning seekers. The keeper group was the next smallest with Ron for Gryffindor, Ernie McMillan for Hufflepuff and Terry Boot for Ravenclaw the only ones who had ever played before. They were joined by a dozen hopefuls of whom Harry secretly hoped one would be able to beat Ron for his spot.

The beaters were the next biggest group and Harry was glad to see not only returning beaters Kirke and Sloper but also Dean, Seamus, two 7th years, and a handful of younger year students from his house out. Overall there were close to 40 students in the beater group. The chaser group was just slightly larger and also had the largest number of girls in it. After the amazing performance by the Gryffindor girl chaser trio the past few years many more girls realized they could play. Harry was shocked to see Lavender, Parvati and Padma all looking ready to play chaser. The only two 6th year Gryffindors not at the position training were Hermione and Neville who were over at announcer training with Colin Creevy and a few of the younger years.

Harry had a meeting after his seeker training with Mike and the team of Farm players. They wanted to discuss whether Harry or David would be representing the Farm in the charity match the next day. David said it was Harry's if he wanted it but he would be happy to play if Harry wanted to save showing his skills for the first real match of the season. "Have you discussed this with Madame Hooch and Dumbledore yet?" Harry asked them. "I don't want this turning into some 'favoritism' thing and blowing up in my face later."

"Hooch is fine with it; I think she wants to see you play tomorrow. Your headmaster had a few complaints but couldn't come up with any real reason not to let you play. Your head of house seemed eager to let you make the decision and even told your headmaster to stuff it." Mike said and they laughed at that.

"I think I would actually rather just watch the game if that's alright with you. I'll make sure I'm ready to jump in as a reserve if you need me

but I'd rather just enjoy the match with my friends." Harry said realizing he didn't want to showcase just how good he was to the other teams, let it be a surprise they were not counting on later.

"I saw you handing out some tokens to a few students this morning, what are they about?" Harry asked curious.

"It's our take on the camp points but shortened up. It's a token to draw for a prize from the gift shop at the end of the day. Each of us has one to hand out in each workshop we help with. We'll explain it at lunch since I forgot to at breakfast," Mike told him with a laugh. "I was too busy listening to your Madame Hooch telling her sister about a prank you pulled on most the staff to remember to make the announcement."

Harry met up with his friends at lunch and saw that Neville looked extremely happy and had a token with him. "Did you guys have fun this morning?" Harry asked, curious if Hermione enjoyed an entire morning of Quidditch.

"It was fantastic!" Neville said with a smile. "I am easily the front runner for the announcer spot and Mitch gave me this token for doing such a great job in our practice announcing. Supposedly they are going to explain what the tokens are for soon."

"I learned a lot today," Hermione said with a smile. "I'm having a good time so far. We'll see how I do on a broom this afternoon though."

"Don't worry, Ashley is the flying instructor. Just trust her and do as she tells you and you may finally be able to get over your fear of flying." Harry suggested, glad his friend was at least going to give it a try. "I hear Madame Hooch will be helping her as well, so there is nothing to worry about, either of you." He said with a quick grin at Neville.

All three friends stayed after lunch to wait for the In-depth Rules Workshop. They were relieved that Ron seemed to have chosen one of the other workshops to attend. The other 3 team captains were in the workshop as well and it seemed like almost half the student body was in attendance. Mitch Jerkins, the Rules Expert at the Farm was

leading the workshop along with help from Strategy Expert Avery Graham, Coaching Trainer Larry Swanson and Squad Manager Mike Butler. Harry was already familiar with most of the rules but found the session interesting none the less. He did have to laugh that Hermione had taken almost 3 feet of notes on what was discussed.

“Well I’m headed off to the pick-up games and the Obstacle Course so I’ll see you at dinner!” Harry said and hurried down to the pitch hoping to get some good scouting in for potential players. Hermione and Neville were going to the nutrition class followed by the beginner flying class and both wanted to speak with the Nutritionist on meal plans and just healthy eating advice.

The big talk at dinner that night was the excitement to see what could be won with their tokens. “I doubt the prizes are all that great,” Parvati said at dinner. “I mean I can’t believe the school can even pay to have this workshop let alone provide good prizes.”

“The school can’t,” Hermione said in the tone that everyone knew meant she was positive of her facts. “The school budget for Quidditch barely pays for upkeep on the pitch. Anything else has to be donated.”

“I wonder who donated an entire weekend Quidditch Workshop?” Seamus asked with wide eyes just imagining the cost.

“The owner of the Farm,” Oliver said interrupting them with a grin. “I think he wanted to show everyone just how great the Farm is and give all of you a shot of making the house team.”

“Does the owner do this often?” Dean asked curiously.

“Well he just took over as owner over the summer so I couldn’t say. But I do know that if any other school wanted what you guys are getting they would have to pay for it. He is quite generous though and has established a few scholarships to different camps for those good players who can’t afford to go.” Oliver told them. “I believe Mike is the guy to talk to if you hope to qualify for one, but you’ll have to be on your house team for sure to get one.”

When dinner was winding down Mike and Ilma walked to the front of the room with Maggie. They had what appeared to be a replica of the Quidditch World Cup with them and Maggie was hauling the 'gift shop' with her. "Ok, this cup has been filled with pieces of parchment with names of different prizes. Each person with a token will get to draw for a prize. The prizes range from things like one of the photographs to autographed professional memorabilia and everything in between. Some things you'll get a choice on like if you win a poster you can choose which one you want, same with the color of a t-shirt etc..." Mike told everyone and the students all cheered.

"Now we don't have enough tokens to go around and we wanted everyone to have a fair shot at winning a prize so we are also going to have the wonderful sorting hat yell out two names each night and those students will win a specific prize. The first student prize tonight is a pair of omnioculars that you can use at the match tomorrow and yes this pair does have the recording option and you have permission to record tomorrow's game." Ilma told them and suddenly the prizes seemed just that much more interesting.

McGonagall brought out the sorting hat, which performed a special song about Quidditch before yelling out the name of a 4th year Slytherin boy who almost tripped over the table in his hurry to claim his prize. The token prizes were next and Harry saw that now both Hermione and Neville had tokens. Hermione was the first called and she won a book, which made the entire great hall laugh as only Hermione could have innocently pulled out a book for a prize. She chose the Illustrated Guide to Quidditch Moves book that she knew Neville had bought at camp and thought would be interesting as well as something Dudley would maybe like for Christmas.

There were a total of 30 prize tokens handed out that day. Draco won a Hogwarts Quidditch Workshop t-shirt they had made special with the Farm crest and "Quidditch Workshop" on the front and the Hogwarts crest and any of the position names on the back, so obviously Draco's said Seeker. Neville won a team poster and chose the Hollyhead Harpies since it was an all girl team. One first year girl from Hufflepuff squealed happily as she won a 'Save the Snidget' plushie. Most of the prizes were t-shirts or photos with an occasional

poster or plushie. Hermione's prize was actually the highest in value for the token prizes that night.

After all 30 students had collected their prizes Mike announced the other all school prize. "We know not all of you are Quidditch enthusiasts so we compromised and the next prize is a pass for free admittance to any of the camps offered at the Farm next summer. We will be having our normal camps as well as a few additions so this should be good for anyone. Just to let you all know this is a prize valued at 70 Galleons!" There was wild applause at the news that one of them would be able to go to the Farm. The sorting hat sang a song about the Farm and then yelled out the name of Katie Bell. Katie was so happy she was almost crying and she even hugged Mike while taking her pass. There was loud applause when her name was called because everyone knew she had been on a team longer than anyone else in the school and this would give her a chance to decide if she wanted to play professionally or not.

The meet and greet session went well with the staff mingling with the students and talking and answering questions. Maggie had the entire gift shop set up on the side of the great hall and was doing quite a profitable business. The Hogwarts t-shirts were a hot seller and Harry bought one for Neville that said Announcer, one for himself that said Seeker and requested the house elves to have two specially made: one for Hermione that would say Bookworm and one for McGonagall that would say Trophy Holder.

Harry, Cho, Draco and Ernie stuck around for the captains meeting with Hooch, her sister, the heads of house and most of the Farm staff. They discussed what to look for in good players for each position, how to decide between two players and what traits to avoid in players. They then discussed the upcoming season and how it would work with the reserve team as well as talked about sportsmanship. Overall it was a very productive meeting. Since Draco was no longer being a complete prat it made working together much easier and they all promised to have a much cleaner season with no fighting and less fouls.

The Farm house elf had just popped back in to hand Harry McGonagall's t-shirt when the meeting ended. "Professor

McGonagall,” Harry called to her with a devious smile on his face. “The Gryffindor Quidditch team would like to present you with this t-shirt in honor of all your support over the years.” He told her and then handed her the shirt.

Minerva knew there had to be more to it than just one of the t-shirts the Farm was selling and opened the bundle. She was happy to note that it was a long sleeve t-shirt compared to the short sleeve they were selling and of a much more comfortable material. The Hogwarts logo was on the front with the words “Quidditch Cup” and then she laughed as she turned it around to see the Gryffindor logo and the words “Trophy Holder.” It was more than Harry had asked of the house elf but realized that it was much more appropriate and an even better idea.

The other heads, other than Snape, and Madame Hooch laughed as she promised to wear it to the first match of the season. “Thank you Mr. Potter,” she said with a smile as she folded it back up. “I intend to remain the Trophy Holder so you should make sure it stays in my office this year.”

“Yes mam,” Harry said with a military salute before heading out of the hall and back to Gryffindor tower to get some sleep before another full day of Quidditch.

Sunday was another beautiful day in Scotland and everyone was excited about their second day of the Quidditch Workshop. Hermione was proudly wearing her new t-shirt from Harry and there were quite a few good humored laughs at her Bookworm title. All three friends stayed after breakfast to attend the workshop on the responsibilities of the Team Captain. The other captains were there as well as about $\frac{3}{4}$ the school. Larry Swanson grumbled to Oliver Wood as he handed him a Galleon having bet that less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the school turned up but Wood had told him he was sure over $\frac{1}{2}$ would be there just to find out if their captains were doing their jobs or not.

Harry had position training again that morning and both Hermione and Neville were going to attend the beginner workshop. Harry almost wished he could just watch Hermione on her first attempt to play Quidditch. Hermione was nervous but determined that she would

be able to play. She and Neville were joined by Luna but they were the only ones over 4th year in attendance and the majority of them were 1st and 2nd years.

By the end of the 2 hour workshop Hermione felt confident that she could use a broom to travel if needed as well as not fall off if attempting to join in a friendly game sometime if someone really wanted her to participate. Neville was doing quite well at the end of the workshop and was actually hoping to join in a few of the pre-tryout pick up games the next week just to see how he could compare. Luna was still her flighty self but was able to stay on her broom and decided she liked seeker the best as she could just look around rather than have to work too hard.

Harry had bowed out of the 'Seeker Showdown' they were having the second hour of the workshop so he could observe the other training sessions to look for hopefuls for his team. He noticed that Ron really was not a very good keeper. He could make some spectacular saves when he really concentrated but he got so worked up anytime someone scored on him or said anything derogatory to him that he couldn't play properly. He heard Oliver try and talk to him about it and Ron blow up and say that Oliver didn't know what he was talking about. The chaser training was fun to watch and he noticed quite a few of his housemates that looked like they had potential. Even Parvati and Lavender were playing well and he decided if they promised to be dedicated to the team he would let them try out.

The beater tryouts were his favorite though as he noticed two distinct pairs of his housemates working perfectly together. The two 7th year boys, Geoffrey Hooper and Richie Coote, were the better of the pairs and seemed to have been playing together for a while. He didn't understand why they didn't try out last year when the twins were kicked off as they would have easily made the team. The other pair of beaters was 2nd year boys, Mitchell and Michael Harden, who were twins and had the same vibe as Fred and George. Harry was going to make sure they tried out because he knew with a little more practice they would be outstanding and were perfect for the reserve team.

The three friends and over half the school attended the Strategy and Game Tactics workshop before lunch. Harry noticed that he and

Hermione were not the only ones taking notes and was glad to see the other Captains were dedicated to their teams as well. The only thing that irked Harry about the session was that Ron received a token for his comments on when to use specific strategies. Harry knew that Ron was a good chess player and a die hard Quidditch fanatic but he didn't like the smug look on his face when he received the token.

Hermione and Neville attended the Broom Design workshop after lunch while Harry walked down to the gates with the Farm team to meet Charlie's team who would be arriving shortly to get ready for the Charity Match. Fred, George and Charlie had each spiked their hair and added gold streaks to make themselves Gryffindor colors. The girls, Angelina, Alicia and Amanda were laughing as the twins were trying to get Pete Hansen, their keeper, to dye his hair to match except in reverse since Pete was blonde.

Both teams were hanging out in the Gryffindor changing rooms getting changed as well as just having a good time talking. About 30 minutes before game time Ashley walked in looked grim. "We have a problem guys. Madame Hooch was just plowed into by a careless flyer and broke her wrist and shin. Madame Pomfrey fixed her right up but absolutely forbid her from flying for the rest of the day." She told them and all of them looked sorry that the Hogwarts Quidditch advisor wouldn't be able to be the referee.

"What's the actual problem?" David asked knowing there was more to it.

"Ilma is still on medical restriction following her injury last week and Mike let his stupid license lapse. The only other person I know of who is not planning on playing right now is Snape to referee." She told them and there were instant complaints that there had to be someone else.

"I think you guys failed to remember that I passed my referee test at camp since you were all plastered after our win over the international team," Harry said with a smirk and there were cheers around the room that Snape wouldn't spoil everything.

“Have you ever refed a game before?” Oliver asked him curiously.

“Nope, but you know I do better under pressure and flying by the seat of my pants and all that,” Harry said casually making everyone laugh.

“Ok, Harry saves the day!” Ashley said with a grin. “Plus you are about as unbiased as possible since you have friends on both teams.”

“Ashley you’ll fill Harry’s spot as reserve seeker then and we need to get Harry some Referee robes,” David said taking charge as he was the unofficial captain of the team. The Farm team left to the Ravenclaw changing room for their pre-game prep talk and Harry headed off to find Madame Hooch and see what quick advice she could give.

The stands were full for the charity match, even with the one Galleon admission fee. All students and faculty were present, including Trelawney. Somehow even Ron scraped together the needed Galleon but Harry assumed that Dumbledore just took pity on him and gave him the money. There was an obvious tingle of excitement to watch a good Quidditch match between the Farm trainers and the Camp Champions. No one other than Neville and Hermione had any idea who would be playing against the Farm team and were anxious to see who had won the amateur camp championship.

“Welcome everyone to today’s Charity Exhibition Game. All proceeds from today’s attendance will benefit the ‘Save the Snidget’ Foundation which was designed to help fund research in bringing back many of our thought to be extinct species and repopulate creatures on the verge of extinction. I’m your announcer, back for a one time engagement, Lee Jordan!” Lee said and the crowd all cheered remembering his wonderful commentaries from the past years.

“Let’s meet the players. The visiting team came all the way from America... the Farm Superstars! They are led by captain and seeker David Church with former Gryffindor Oliver Wood at keeper, Beaters Max Ames and Leo Berglund and Chasers Ken Phillips, John Delancy and former Hufflepuff Ethan Harris. Each team is allowed to

suit three reserve players. For the Farm we have reserve seeker Ashley Price who is the current girlfriend of Pro Seeker Victor Krum, in the reserve chaser spot we have former Ravenclaw Maggie Smith and in the reserve keeper spot we have Avery Graham.” There was loud and happy applause across the stands but many were curious why the Farm team was playing as the visiting team.

“Not lets give a big welcome back to your home team the Gryffindor Lions! This team won the amateur camp championship by going undefeated this past summer. They are led by captain and seeker Charlie Weasley who is currently training to be a Beast Master,” Lee said and he had to pause to let the roar of the crowd die down as they realized that they would know many of the amateur players. “Next we have keeper Pete Hansen a researcher for the Ministry of Magic who is also a former Gryff for any who didn’t guess,” Lee said with a grin. “At beater we have Fred and George Weasley, owners of Weasley Wizard Wheezes,” he didn’t get any farther with all the cheers. Most of the student body missed the prankster twins and even the first years had heard by now how they went out with a bang last year. “And at chaser we have back together the Triple A attack force of Angelia Johnson, Alicia Spinet and Amanda White. Angie and Alicia will both be accepting offers to play pro starting this season and Amanda works at the Magical Menagerie.” There was another roar of approval from the crowd and the former Gryffindors were almost overwhelmed with the support they were getting from the whole school, even most of the Slytherins were cheering. “For the Lions acting as reserve seeker Slytherin Draco Malfoy, in the reserve keeper spot we have Hufflepuff Ernie McMillan and playing reserve chaser is Gryffindor Katie Bell.”

The cheers were massive but to Harry the best part by far was seeing Draco emerge from the locker room in Gryffindor colors. Draco had won the seeker showdown and earned his place on the reserve team and Katie and Ernie had each earned their spot as well. The only thing that confused the crowd was that they had expected to see Harry on the field someplace.

“As many of you know our very own Madame Hooch was slated to referee this match but received an injury during a flying workshop. So, it is my great pleasure to introduce to you today’s referee. This will be

his first official match but I have seen a certified copy of his license. Without him we would have had to watch Professor Snape referee this match,” Lee paused to smirk at the boos from the crowd at the idea of Snape as referee. “Here to start the match is referee Harry Potter!” The crowd once again cheered, many laughing as they realized why he was not playing.

Harry released the snitch and then the bludgers before tossing the quaffle into the air and taking to the sky himself. He had wanted to watch the game but he hadn’t anticipated needing to watch it quite so closely. “And they’re off. Lions with possession. Johnson passes to White who passes to Spinnet who shoots and saved by Oliver Wood. Wood a former team mate of these three girls is going to be tough to beat as he is not only one of the world’s best keepers but also knows the three girls moves as he designed many of them himself!” Lee was having a great time being back and was glad that he was able to come out and do a last hurrah kind of thing since he hadn’t enjoyed his last few games without the twins and Harry playing.

The game was fast pace and Harry could tell that the Farm team was not playing as hard as they could have and giving Charlie’s team a shot, although a very small one. Oliver was enjoying himself watching his former teammates get frustrated trying to score on him. Each girl had scored once but he had blocked at least 4 shots for each of them as well. Pete for the Lions was doing a fair job of keeping the pro level chasers from scoring. There was no doubt from any of the fans that he was a great keeper and if he wasn’t so old (he’s at least 5 years older than Charlie) he would probably be picked up by a team. Since he only had a few good years of playing time left he most likely would just be a fantastic amateur like the rest.

It was an hour and 45 minutes into the game and the Farm team was ahead 230 to 40 when Charlie spotted the snitch. He knew his team had no hope of winning but if he caught the snitch at least it wouldn’t be a complete blow out. He had spotted it before David who was on the other side of the pitch although neither had a huge advantage distance wise but David had a much better broom. The crowd went wild when they realized Charlie was chasing the snitch and David quickly spotted it and joined the pursuit. The snitch decided it did not feel like being caught and led the two seekers on a wild chase around

the pitch finally darting down almost skimming the grass. Charlie was determined to win though and took a play out of Harry's book and dove off his broom, grabbing the snitch and rolling to avoid major injury.

The roar from the crowd was huge as the supposed underdog caught the snitch, even using a slower broom. Charlie proudly held the snitch aloft and Harry blew his whistle signifying the end of the game. "And Charlie Weasley comes up with a spectacular diving catch of the snitch and ears the Lions 150 points. This ends our charity match with the Farm Superstars victorious with a score of 230 to 190! What a great game!" Lee said with slight awe in his voice as he watched his best friends' brother beat out one of the better seekers in the world.

Harry joined his friends on the walk back to the castle. He had really enjoyed being the referee but decided that playing was still a whole lot more fun. "You did a great job Harry," Hermione told him giving him a hug. "I didn't notice any fouls that you missed."

"Thanks," He said with a grin, "But it wasn't exactly a dirty game so it was fairly easy."

"You were better than Snape any day," Neville said and the friends laughed and headed into the great hall for the feast that was scheduled in honor of the end of the Workshop.

After dinner Mike stood up to address the students once again. "At all camps at the Farm we hand out awards at the end of the week. We give awards to the best players of each position as well as some fun awards for the best dressed or the craziest person. Since we only had two days with you we are limiting the awards we hand out to you guys. Each person who gets an award will receive a certificate as well as a prize token. These awards were decided upon by the Farm staff from what we saw at the workshop and will have no bearing on things such as team tryouts." He told them with a grin.

"We'll start with the position awards." Ilma Hooch said standing up with a few certificates in her hand. "We have broken them up into the best for years 5 and over and the best for years 4 and down so that the younger years have an even chance. Our winner for best Older

Seeker is Draco Malfoy of Slytherin house and best Younger Seeker is Dennis Creevy of Gryffindor house!" She said and the two surprised boys came up and got their tokens. "Our winner for best Older Chaser is Katie Bell of Gryffindor house and best Younger Chaser is Erin Grimes of Slytherin house. Our winner for best Older Beater is Millicent Bulstrode of Slytherin house and best Youngest Beater is Tad Worthington of Ravenclaw house. Our winner for best Older Keeper is Ernie McMillan of Hufflepuff house and best Younger Keeper is Trevor Logan of Gryffindor house. These 8 students worked hard, played well and had good sportsmanship this past weekend and we at the Farm hope to see some of them at camp next summer!" Ilma finished and the winners were applauded once again.

"And now what you were waiting so patiently for... the prizes!" Mike called out to the cheers of the crowd. The first all student prize tonight is a block of tickets to the Holiday Charity Game between the Vrastra Vultures and the Wimbourne Wasps. This is a set of 10 tickets for you and your family to enjoy this game being played on Boxing Day to benefit the 'Save the Snidget' Foundation!" The students were almost silent in anticipation of who the sorting hat would call out to win such a great prize. After a song from the hat, this time about 'Save the Snidget,' the hat yelled out the name of Cho Chang and the entire Ravenclaw table went wild with cheers, each secretly hoping to be one of those invited to go to the game.

Ilma stood to speak again, although it took a few minutes to calm the Ravenclaws down enough so she could be heard. "Now we also have some other awards to hand out for those who did well in the other workshops." This quickly quieted the hall as everyone who had not won was hoping they would now. "Our first award is for Best New Flyer and goes to 1st year Hannah Applegate from Ravenclaw. The award for Most Improved Flyer goes to Max Fulton of Hufflepuff house. The award for Best First Time Player goes to Neville Longbottom from Gryffindor House. The award for Best Broom Design goes to Blaise Zabini of Slytherin house. The award for Most Rules Knowledge goes to Lisa Turpin of Ravenclaw house." There was polite applause for all those who won an award.

"Our final two awards are for the fastest times on the obstacle course and we broke this award in two like the position awards by age. The

Younger Fastest goes to Carmen Sanders from Slytherin house. The student with the best time and winner of the Older Fastest award is Harry Potter, who just so happens to hold the student record on the actual Farm obstacle course as well.” There was a lot of applause for Harry although very few were surprised with his talent on a broom.

The token prizes were next with both Harry and Neville having tokens to cash in. Harry was glad that he had gotten an award for the obstacle course rather than something subjective that someone could have accused him being favored. Dennis was the first from their table called up and like Hermione he also won a book, choosing Spectacular Seeker Snatches, a great book for younger seekers and Harry was glad, as he was certain the Dennis would win the reserve spot. Neville won a small plushie and chose a stuffed quaffle thinking he would give it one of the girl players for Christmas. Katie was the first person to win jewelry and chose a quaffle pendent necklace. Ron was the next Gryffindor to go up and he jumped up and down in happiness as he won his choice of autographed Quidditch robes and chose his favorite player, the keeper for the Chudley Cannons.

“How did he end up with one of the most expensive prizes?” Hermione asked with a frown. “I watched him through the award presentation and he was scowling like he thought he deserved one. He is such a prat.”

“Don’t worry about it Mione,” Harry told her with a smile. “Those robes have probably been collecting dust in the gift shop anyway with how horrid the cannons play.” That cheered her up and they went back to watching the other prizes. Harry was one of the last to get his prize and laughed as he also won a small plushie except he chose the stuffed snitch, giving it a cuddle and making everyone laugh.

After all the students had collected their prizes Mike announced the other all school prize. “Ok now the moment you have all been waiting for! Our final prize of the workshop and it’s easily the best. This prize was kindly donated to the workshop by the Nimbus Broom Corporation.” You could hear a pin drop in the hall as everyone almost held their breath to see if they really were giving away a new broom. “Our final prize is a brand new Nimbus 2005!” The roar of applause was almost deafening as they all waited for the hat to tell

them who would win a brand new broom. The sorting hat sang about brooms this time and then yelled out the name of Megan Jones, who just happened to be the Hufflepuff seeker and in desperate need of a new broom. The celebration at the Hufflepuff table was immense and even the other tables joined in the applause.

There was another meet and greet session after dinner and then anyone interested got to listen to a talk on what it takes to become a professional Quidditch player. It was almost curfew by the time the professors started herding everyone back to their dorms and reminding them they had classes in the morning.

Harry was able to say a quick goodbye to his both his former Gryffindor friends and those from the Farm. "Stop by for a day over Christmas," Ilma told him with a fond smile. "You should see just what Otto can do with those weather charms!"

"Make sure you win the cup this year," Oliver told him seriously. "It's a rebuilding year for everyone but don't let that stop you. And whatever you do, don't get hurt and miss a game!" Harry just laughed and promised that if he couldn't visit over the holiday he would at least send them all presents. He made his way back up to the common room both sad for the weekend to be over and excited for the season to come. It was going to be one great year to play Quidditch at Hogwarts.

Chapter 5: Quidditch Tryouts and Fallout

The next week went by quickly and Harry spent each evening down on the pitch watching the pick-up games between those who were planning on trying out for a house team. Neville was playing well in the games but told Harry that unless for some reason he was good enough to make the main team that he would rather be the announcer than on the reserve team. Harry could understand that since as announcer he would actually get to participate and he knew Neville liked announcing better than flying. Parvati and Lavender never came to any of the pick-up games and Hermione told him that they enjoyed the workshop but didn't want to devote the time to actually being on the team.

Gryffindor was the first team to hold tryouts and they would be Saturday starting after breakfast. Madame Hooch, Professor McGonagall and a talent scout for the English National Team would watch the entire tryout and then Harry would have to present his choices to them and defend them before being allowed to post the finished roster.

Ron was strutting around Gryffindor tower like he owned it the week leading up to tryouts telling anyone who would listen about how well he did at the workshop and how he was naturally going to still be the starting keeper. Trevor Logan, the 3rd year who received the Younger Keeper award could be seen glaring at the obnoxious redhead constantly. Trevor had tried out for the team last year as well and had been beaten by Ron and had since heard that it was only because of Dumbledore that he didn't win the spot. He had been at every pick-up game and was practicing with all the chaser hopefuls and even with Katie so that he could beat the pants of Ron.

Hermione offered to help Harry run the tryout by keeping track of people's names, positions and writing down any notes that Harry dictated to her. "Welcome to the Gryffindor House Quidditch Team tryouts. Everyone here will be given an equal chance but I am sorry to say that no 1st years are allowed on the reserve team, so if you want to play you will have to make the starting team or wait until next year." Harry told everyone assembled on the pitch with the help of a voice magnification charm.

“Ok, let’s start with the chasers since they are the largest group. First off I want all of you to do two laps around the pitch.” He said and watched the 12 hopefuls fly off. There were four 1st years trying out so unless one of them was phenomenal he would only have to choose between the remaining 8 for the 6 available spots. After the laps he had them play a game of tag and then do some passing drills. “Ok, we have 6 keepers trying out. I want each of you to man one hoop and I’ll set the chasers loose with 3 quaffles trying to score on you.” Harry said and grinned as the chaser hopefuls looked eager to start scoring on the potential keepers.

Katie Bell and Natalie McDonald teamed up and decided to put Ron through the ringer. The two girls got him so flustered he was shouting profanities at them and missing easy shots. Of the other keepers trying out only two of them had potential. Trevor was doing the best so far and Jimmy Peaks, his year mate, was also doing well. Two 2nd year boys needed a lot more work and the 5th year girl looked afraid the quaffle would hurt her.

Harry was impressed with the chaser hopefuls. Three of the 1st years were hopeless and the last one was a decent flyer but couldn’t keep hold of the ball. The remaining 8 all had some talent and now Harry was just waiting to see who pulled away as better than the others. Katie was obviously his top choice and he was glad to see her working so well with Natalie. Leanne Parker, one of Katie’s friends and fellow 7th year, was showing good skills along with Demelza Robins who was very quick. Harry knew it would be between those 4 that he chose the starters.

“Ok, I want Katie, Natalie and Leanne in the air against Trevor as keeper. I want Demelza, Romilda and Karen in the air against Ron on the other end of the pitch. The rest of you take a break for a few.” Harry said, watching how well Leanne worked with Natalie and Katie, who were already working well together. Demelza was much better than the other two with her and was having an easy time scoring on Ron. He switched them all out with younger players of whom only Jimmy Peaks did well as keeper.

"You can all rest while I get the beaters going," Harry said and pointed out a table of light snacks and water that Hermione had set up for those trying out. "All beater hopefuls, I want three laps around the pitch." He told them and then had them practice hitting bludgers back and forth. He pulled down two 1st year boys and thanked them for trying but stopped them before they hurt someone on accident. That left the two 7th years and twin 2nd years from the workshop along with Sloper and Kirke from last year and Dean and Seamus.

"Ok, I want Katie, Demelza and Natalie against Ron in goal with Hooper and Coote trying to keep them from scoring. I want Leanne, Romilda and Karen against Jimmy in goal with Sloper and Kirke as beaters." Harry said and watched as Ron self destructed but was glad to see that the three girls were working well together. The 7th years were great beaters but Harry was amazed to see how well Demelza dodged bludgers. The other three chasers were not fairing as well even though the returning beaters were not very skilled. Jimmy was doing much better in goal than Ron was and Harry was ecstatic as it was looking like he could keep Ron off the team entirely, not just out of the starting position.

"Everyone down and take a break," Harry instructed after a few more rotations of the hopefuls. "I want everyone but the two seeker hopefuls to head into the great hall for an early lunch. We will have a few full out scrimmage games after lunch for those who show the most promise." He smiled as his tired housemates eagerly followed his instructions. Dennis Creevy and the younger brother of 4th year chaser hopeful Karen Jacobsen were the only two trying out for the reserve seeker position. "Dennis is a 3rd year and Toby you are a 2nd year so both of you have plenty of time to improve your game and make the starting spot when I leave." He told them with a smile. "I have offers to play for multiple different pro teams. I'm not telling you this to brag but to explain why it will be almost impossible for you to take the starting position from me. Any questions?"

"Will you work with us to improve our skills if we make the team?" Dennis asked with a hopeful look on his face.

"Of course, that's the captain's main job. I will be having the starting players working with the reserve players all year to help both." Harry

said and the boys smiled. "Now I want to see two laps of the pitch at full speed," he told them and began to put the two small boys through their paces. He followed Wood's example and sent golf balls flying for them to catch. He then got a charmed practice snitch that would only fly within a specific boundary and could be called back in with the proper command. He had Dennis and Toby spend the rest of the lunch break fighting over the snitch. Dennis caught it 5 times with Toby only coming up with it once.

As the rest of those trying out headed back from lunch Harry motioned the two boys down. "That was great guys, why don't you head in and eat now yourselves. You can join the practice games when you are done."

"Harry, here's a sandwich and some pumpkin juice for you," Hermione said with a look that threatened bodily harm if he didn't take the time to eat himself.

"Everyone in the air," Harry said before starting his sandwich. "I want 5 warm up laps around the pitch and then we will be doing speed drills." They all grumbled but did as requested, except for Ron.

"Get up in the air Ron," Harry said calmly. "I'm not moving on until everyone has warmed back up."

"This is stupid; flying circles around the pitch has nothing to do with Quidditch. I refuse to participate in such a stupid exercise." Ron stated loudly.

"Well the castle is back that way," Harry said pointing. "If you don't want to be on the team then head back in."

"You can't keep me from the team just because I said your warm-up was stupid!" Ron yelled, almost foaming at the mouth with pent up anger at his former friend.

"No Mr. Grant," Madame Hooch said coming over to back up Harry. "But he can keep you from the team for not completing the entire tryout. Now get in the air or go back to the castle, it's your choice."

She told him and he realized he had no options and grumbling made his way around the pitch.

“What an idiot,” Hermione said summing up everyone else’s thoughts as well.

It was another couple hours before Harry called everyone in and thanked them for coming to the tryout. He said that the team roster would be posted in the common room either later that night or sometime tomorrow once he had made his decision. He gave Hermione a hug for all her help as he accepted the notes he had asked her to take for him. Harry followed McGonagall, Hooch and Jim Koehler the scout for the national team back into the school and to the teacher’s lounge where they would discuss the tryout and make sure Harry picked the best team.

“Well here goes,” Harry said quietly to himself as he posted the roster on the board in the common room. He then took the coward’s route out and hurried back up to his room where the rest of the dorm was already asleep. The roster had been finished a few hours ago but he waited until the room was empty to post it. He knew there would be quite a few disappointed people once they saw it and wanted to try and avoid as many altercations as possible. He also wanted to avoid any crying girls entirely.

Harry was one of the first students out of bed and into the great hall Sunday morning. He knew most students had a lie in on the weekend and wanted to be completely clear of the common room once everyone noticed the list was posted. Hermione joined him a few minutes later; she was a natural early riser.

“I saw the list,” she told him as she started making herself a plate. “I think it will be a great team. Are you hiding down here so that when Ron makes a scene there are plenty of witnesses?”

“That’s a big reason,” he told her. “But Dean and Seamus tried out as well so I have potentially upset 3 of my 4 roommates. Self preservation instincts told me to be in a public place when they realized and not asleep in my bed unprotected.”

Neville stumbled in sleepily about 10 minutes later. "I'm guessing you didn't put Ron on the team from the screaming that woke me up this morning." He said as he gratefully sank onto the bench on the other side of Harry. "So who is on the team?" Harry smiled at his sleepy friend and took out a copy of the roster and passed it to him.

Starting Team:

Seeker: Harry Potter – 6th year

Keeper: Trevor Logan – 3rd year

Beaters: Geoffrey Hooper – 7th year

Richie Coote – 7th year

Chasers: Katie Bell – 7th year

Natalie McDonald – 3rd year

Demelza Robins – 4th year

Reserve Team:

Seeker: Dennis Creevy – 3rd year

Keeper: Jimmy Peakes – 3rd year

Beaters: Michael Harden – 2nd year

Mitchel Harden – 2nd year

Chasers: Leanne Parker – 7th year

Karen Jacobsen – 4th year

Sandy Baker – 2nd year

"Ouch, he didn't even make the reserve team after being starting keeper last year," Neville said trying to hold in his laughter. "No

wonder he is on rampage. I'd hang out here until he comes otherwise you may want to wear a shield charm today."

"I almost hope he tries something stupid." Harry told them honestly. "He has been nothing but a prat since school started. He is rude to everyone and goes around acting like the injured party when he was the one that was in the wrong. If he does something stupid then we can get rid of him. He's already on thin ice as it is. The DMLE is willing to press charges against him for everything if he so much as lifts a finger at me. If Dumbles tries to protect him then the Board of Governors' will have to get involved again."

"He had a horrible tryout," Hermione told Neville. "From what I heard he also didn't play well at the workshop either. He was a jerk to the Farm staff and uses language that even the Slytherins don't bother with to belittle anyone else playing and cusses at the rest of the team that it's their fault if a chaser scores on him. His attitude would be a deterrent to the team even if he did have any skill."

"That's exactly what the teachers and the scout for the national team said and all three are 100 behind my decision. In fact Madame Hooch seemed relieved that they didn't have to veto my decision as they had thought I would put him as reserve since he had playing experience." Harry told them with an evil smirk knowing that Ron would immediately complain to Dumbledore, then McGonagall and Hooch before confronting him.

Breakfast was almost over and Harry had received 8 kisses on the cheek from his new team mates. It started with Katie who was so happy she gave him a peck, she was with Leanne who followed suit and then the other 4 chasers decided they would as well. 7th years Hooper and Coote, pretending they didn't want to be left out, decided to join in as well much to the amusement of everyone at breakfast. Dennis, Trevor, Jimmy, Mike and Mitch entered the hall in an excited huddle and just waved to Harry saying thanks before heading off to talk about the upcoming season.

Harry was talking to Dean and Seamus about their tryout, both of whom knew they didn't have a chance of making the team, when he went sprawling from the bench with pain on the side of his face. He

barely had time to register a livid face and red hair before he was punched over and over again. Finally coming to his senses a few seconds later he cast a wandless physical protection shield that sent Ron flying backwards away from him. Harry cursed himself for letting his protection down, hearing a metal voice that sounded like Mad Eye chanting 'Constant Vigilance' in his mind. He was sure his jaw was broken, he was afraid he had a broken rib or two and his left eye was swelling shut.

Hermione and Neville both took a moment to realize what had happened and were unable to protect their friend from the crazy redhead. Once Harry had tossed Ron off Hermione fired a full body bind curse at him and Neville followed up with binding him in magical ropes. The professors were all in the hall and had witnessed the event. Tonks, Remus and McGonagall were hurrying over and calling for all the students to move away.

"Are you alright Harry?" Remus asked him as he knelt down next to the beaten boy. "Madame Pomfrey is on her way down and I don't want to move you until she examines you."

"Not Pomfrey, get Nani." Harry was able to rasp out. It was becoming hard to breathe and his face felt like it was on fire.

"I'll go get her Harry," Hermione said and unobtrusively unclasped his emergency portkey from his ankle before heading out of the hall.

She appeared moments later in the goblin security office. "Help, I'm Harry Potter's sister. He has been hurt at Hogwarts and I need healer Nani to go back with me and heal him." She was relieved when the goblins went from looking ready to attack to quickly summoning the healer she had requested.

Ragnok heard his alarm he had set up to tell him if Harry ever used his emergency portkey and hurried off to the security office. He was surprised to see Harry's sister there instead but realized from the look on her face that something was wrong. He didn't have time to speak before Nani came rushing in followed by two other goblin healers all carrying their medical supply cases. "Harry is hurt," Nani told him quickly.

“Where is Lord Potter?” He asked Hermione and then proceeded to make a goblin portkey directly to entry before the great hall. “Everyone hold on, this will take us through the wards and will be slightly unpleasant.” The 6 goblins, as two security guards had also come, along with Hermione arrived less than 5 minutes after the fight ended and hurried into the hall.

The students and staff were shocked when Hermione returned moments after leaving with a goblin contingent. Tonks had taken charge in the mean time and every student, other than Neville and Ron, was now stuck to their seats and unable to get in the way. Pomfrey had arrived as Hermione was leaving and Remus was keeping her from approaching Harry. The matron was getting increasingly upset and demanding access to her patient. When Tonks saw Hermione come back she carefully steered the other professors away, placing a shield between them and Harry to give the goblins room to work.

Nani saw the swollen eye and raspy breathing of her favorite human and quickly got to work while vowing retribution on the party responsible. She quickly reached into her case and started pouring potions into his mouth while she used her magic to knit the ribs back into their correct place. One of the broken ribs had punctured his lung and that was why it was so hard for him to breathe. After repairing the internal damage and making sure his eye and jaw were being treated by the other two healers she nodded at Ragnok who was waiting to get the signal that Harry was stable.

“Albus Dumbledore, Headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, you have allowed Goblin Friend Lord Harry James Potter Black to be injured on your school premises. Explain or suffer the consequences.” Ragnok said, the menace in his voice sending shivers down the spines of everyone present.

Albus didn’t know what to do. He had been trying to come up with a way to downplay the entire thing since he saw the first hit Ron landed but now he knew it was hopeless. Why hadn’t he been informed that Harry had been named Goblin Friend? As a Goblin Friend he was offered the same privileges as a full ambassador and had the full

protection of the Goblin Nation. He knew that Ron was in more trouble than he realized and couldn't come up with anything that would help either of them.

"I'm sure we can all agree that this was just a misunderstanding. Boys will be boys and fights happen, much as we try to prevent them." Albus said, turning his grandfatherly twinkle to full force.

"Madame Auror," Ragnok said to Tonks, who was still maintaining control of the situation. "I wish to know exactly what happened here."

"Master Goblin," she said with a bow. "Lord Potter was enjoying breakfast with his friends at the Gryffindor table. They were discussing the Quidditch team, which was selected late last night. I saw Mr. Grant approach Lord Potter and then without any warning or provocation he pulled back his arm and struck Lord Potter on the side of the face, sending him sprawling off the bench into the aisle. Mr. Grant then took advantage of Lord Potter being momentarily dazed and jumped upon him and began to rain punches down on Lord Potter. Moments later Lord Potter was able to conjure a physical shield that sent Mr. Grant flying. Lady Granger performed a full body bind and Mr. Longbottom bound Mr. Grant to keep him from further attack. I was already on my way to stop Mr. Grant, along with Professors Lupin and McGonagall. When Professor Lupin arrived at Lord Potter's side he informed him that the healer was on the way and Lord Potter refused Healer Pomfrey's care and requested Healer Nani. Lady Granger immediately left and then returned mere minutes later." Tonks finished her report with another bow, extremely glad she had reread her auror handbook on how to deal with goblins after she found out Harry was a Goblin Friend.

"Are there any disputes to the aurors report?" Ragnok asked.

"Master Goblin," Draco Malfoy's voice was heard from his end of the Slytherin table. "I have more information to add to the report." Tonks nodded and released Draco from his binds and he came forward, bowed slightly to Ragnok and began his report.

"I was in the entry hall, having just left breakfast, when I saw Mr. Grant approaching from the direction of the Headmaster's office. He

was muttering to himself and looked extremely angry. As we have a history of animosity I stepped behind a statue to avoid his anger. He paused just before the doors to the hall and looked around. Mr. Grant then proceeded to cast speed charms on himself as well as two charms on his hands for protection and then he cast another spell to increase his physical strength to his arms. He quickly entered the hall after that. I followed him inside as I was curious about his reasoning for casting such spells. Unfortunately he had already attacked Lord Potter by that point.” Draco said with another slight bow and was signaled by Tonks to remain.

Ragnok could not remember the last time he was this angry. He rounded on where Ron was still immobilized and bound. “This boy will be questioned and then arrested for unprovoked assault of a Goblin Friend and any other charges currently pending. A report from Master Healer Nani will be made available of the injuries sustained by Lord Potter. I expect full cooperation with the Ministry of Magic and Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry as is outlined in the treaty.” Albus paled as he listened first to Tonks, then to Malfoy and then finally to Ragnok.

“And you shall have the support of the Ministry,” Amelia Bones, Head of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement, said as she entered the hall followed by a team of four aurors. Albus paled even further as Nora Longbottom and the rest of the Board of Governors’ followed the aurors into the hall accompanied by Neville Longbottom, of whom none of the professors had realized had disappeared from the hall. Neville had raced to the Headmaster’s office at the same time Hermione was retrieving the goblins. He told the gargoyle that the Heir had been injured and he needed to contact the Ministry and Board of Governors immediately. The stone guardian had immediately moved aside and the paintings in the office had directed him to the floo powder and he was quickly able to make the call to Madame Bones followed by his grandmother and Manuel Zabini, the head of the Board of Governors. Within minutes the headmaster’s office was full of people and they headed down to the great hall.

Harry had kept quiet during all this giving his tired lungs time to adjust to just being punctured and then healed. He felt Hogwarts feeding him energy. As he ran his fingers over the cool stone of the floor.

The essence of the castle was appalled that her heir should come to harm inside her walls and was now trying to help in any way, including letting a student into the Headmasters office to call for help. The castle knew the headmaster would not help the boy and decided to take the decision out of his hands. The castle was also helping keep the rest of the students in their seats.

After a quick and quiet discussion, Amelia spoke. "We will release the students back to their dormitories. They are to remain in their common rooms until lunch, by which time we hope to have this trouble settled." She said and all the professors other than the heads of house, and Professors Lambert, Lupin and Tonks herded the unaffected students from the hall. Once all the students were gone Amelia looked down at Harry with a sad smile. "Are you up to having the investigation now or would you prefer us to wait until you are stronger?" She asked him.

"I am fine Madame," He told her and used Remus's help to get to his feet. "A benefit of being the Heir of Hogwarts is that she is able to feed me excess energy if I am in danger. My health has been healed and my energy renewed so there is no need to wait. I wouldn't mind a comfy chair to sit in though." He said and sent a smile at McGonagall when she conjured an overstuffed recliner for him to sit in and he sank into it gratefully.

"Dobby, you can stop hiding now. I'll be fine," Harry said to seemingly thin air and his favorite house elf popped into sight standing right next to his chair. Those who knew Dobby was working for Harry just smiled while the others were momentarily stunned. "Ok, can we just get this over with please?" He asked Amelia as he accepted the mug of hot chocolate from Nani with a few more healing potions laced in it.

"Madame Bones, Ravenclaw House is supposed to hold their Quidditch tryouts today. Could we release those students to the pitch please? I don't want this mess to cause the other students undue hardship." Harry said and Flitwick hurried off to the common room to tell his students they could still hold their tryout. They would be ready to begin when Flitwick returned.

"We have sent two aurors to retrieve Mr. Grants mother as he is still a minor and his guardian must be present during questioning," Amelia said and then smiled as Molly was escorted into the hall by Kingsley Shacklebolt and Patrick Greengrass, older brother of 6th year Slytherin Daphne Greengrass.

Molly started crying seeing her son bound in ropes and surrounded by aurors. She just hoped he hadn't done anything so stupid as to land him in Azkaban. Kingsley conjured a chair and releasing the body bind he moved Ron into it, keeping him bound. Ron was glaring at everyone and he was obviously yelling but someone had silenced him. Harry assumed it was Hermione from the looks she was sending her former friend.

"Ronald Grant you have been accused of unprovoked assault on Goblin Friend Lord Harry James Potter Black. The statements of witnesses attest that this was a premeditated assault; therefore you will be questioned under truth serum." Kingsley said and then placed 3 drops of the clear potion on his tongue and waited for it to take effect. He was sad that this was the second time in less than 2 months he would be questioning the same disturbed young man.

"What is your name?" Ronald Billius Grant

"Did you assault Harry Potter today?" Yes

"Why did you assault him today?" Because he kept me from my rightful place on the Quidditch team and I hate him. It's his fault my family is ruined.

"Did you plan to assault Harry Potter prior to entering the great hall?" Yes, I knew I was going to beat the living daylights out of him as soon as the headmaster told me he couldn't change the team roster.

"Did you perform any spell to assist you in your attack?" Yes, I charmed by hands not to get hurt and cast speed and strength charms the headmaster taught me so that I could hurt him more.

"What did you hope to accomplish with the attack?" I wanted to hurt him as badly as possible. I was hoping to break his face in multiple

places and hopefully break a few ribs. I wanted to hurt him so badly that even with healers he wouldn't be able to play Quidditch ever again.

"Were you aware that you could have killed Mr. Potter with the spells you placed on yourself?" Yes, I figured it would just be a bonus if the bastard died.

"Did you make any plans for what you would do after the fight?" No, I knew the headmaster would protect me as the ministry has no jurisdiction at the school.

"Have you committed any crimes against Harry Potter since the school year started?" I have tried to break into his trunk and I tried to place tracking spells on him and his school supplies.

"Have you committed any other crimes since the school year started?" I tried to place tracking charms on Hermione, Neville and Luna as well as their stuff. I stole 5 galleons from different students to be able to attend the Charity match as well as get stuff from the Farm gift shop. I set the board in the common room on fire.

"Did anyone know about these crimes before you committed them?" No but the headmaster suspected and told me to keep my nose clean.

"Did the headmaster know that you were going to assault Mr. Potter?" No, he specifically told me not to.

"When did you learn the strength and speed charms from the headmaster?" This summer before coming back to school, he has been tutoring me since.

"Do you feel remorse for any of your crimes?" No

"Will you continue to break the law if released?" Yes

"Have you ever practiced dark magic?" No

"Are you a supporter of the Dark Lord Voldemort?" No

Molly just sat weeping as she knew her son was done for just like her daughter was. Ginny's trial was to begin in a few weeks and she was still being held by the ministry. Now Ron would be taken from her as well and she knew that the physical assault would earn him a severe punishment not to mention all the charges they still had from before. She couldn't believe how horrible her life was going and how Dumbledore allowed it all to get so out of control.

Chapter 6: Trials and Truths

The next morning at breakfast the students were still abuzz with gossip about the attack on Harry the previous afternoon. Having been sequestered in their common rooms until dinnertime they were all anxious to see if Harry was fully recovered and if Ron was still a student.

Hermione and Neville flanked Harry as they walked into the hall, making sure the other students would leave him alone. Harry appreciated his friend's protection but was actually doing fine. He had known from the moment he decided not to press charges against Ron during the summer that his idiot former friend would do something stupid and lose his last chance. The thing he wondered about now was how Dumbledore was going to act and what the public reaction would be. He had been asked some very pointed questions by both Madame Bones and the Board of Governors' and he wondered just how long Dumbles would remain Headmaster. His musings were interrupted by the arrival of the morning post and the front page headlines of the Daily Prophet: "Students Expelled from Hogwarts... Dumbledore's Fault or Their Own?"

The article outlined what had happened in the great hall with Ron along with interviews of students who Ron had been rude to throughout the years. They painted a rather accurate picture of Ron's anger and jealousy issues as well as outlined everything that Harry had accused Ron of that day in Diagon Alley. They then went on to talk about Ginny and what she was going to stand trial for the next week. After they painted a picture of her being a gold-digging stalker they went on to ask the question that Harry himself asked often: Who was to blame for what those two did to him? The article speculated that if Molly had been the kind of mother she pretended to be to the two of them perhaps they would not have been taken in by Dumbledore's manipulations. The article then outlined everything that Harry had revealed that Dumbledore and Molly had done to him. There were additional interviews of students about the headmaster and his need to control and constantly watch Harry. They also interviewed a member of the Board of Governors who explained the things Albus had done to 'dumb down' the children of wizarding world

so he could continue to play the part of 'wise old man' without anyone to challenge him.

"Wow Harry, this article hits hard," Hermione commented as she finished. Harry agreed that the article was quite blunt about the failings of not only the headmaster but the former Weasleys as well. "I wonder how Mr. Weasley is going to handle all of this?"

"Well Bill looks pleased," Neville commented and they looked up at the head table to see the reactions of the other professors. "The Old Goat looks like he is ready to spit nails." They all smirked at the outraged look on Dumbledore's face. They were waiting for the old man to get his due. Harry had been shocked when there was barely any mention of what he had revealed in Diagon Alley over the summer in the paper. He assumed that the papers thought he was lying and were holding the stories for confirmation or some other such rot. He was content now as revealing everything as 'new' information to the public right after the incident with Ron was a brilliant move by the publishers and hit just that much harder.

The chatter in the great hall was much louder than normal as everyone tried to decide if the article was accurate or not. There was a lot of speculation on if it was just a smear to hurt the headmaster or if he was really responsible for all that had happened to Harry. As the noise level got higher and higher the headmaster's patience became less and less. "Quiet!" Dumbledore's voice rang out throughout the hall with a growl. The students immediately clamed and looked to their absolutely livid headmaster. None of the students had ever seen him without his customary twinkle, which was notably gone now. "I don't want to hear one more word about this morning's Prophet. Every single word printed in this rag is completely untrue."

Harry wasn't about to sit by and let the headmaster first strong arm the students and then lie to them. "I beg to differ headmaster," He said loudly so that he could be easily heard in the nearly silent hall. "There is not a single mistruth printed in that article this morning. It seems the Prophet is finally verifying their facts before publishing. Perhaps you would like to explain which points you feel are lies and then I can present evidence to the student body on their accuracy."

"200 Points from Gryffindor Mr. Potter and detention for the next month with Filch for disrespecting and contradicting your betters." Albus all but snarled at Harry.

"You can take every single point from Gryffindor Mr. Dumbledore but I refuse to serve detention for speaking the truth as I was forced to all of last year." Harry said evenly and watched as many students nodded their agreement as they had seen how many detentions Umbridge had given him.

"You will address me by my proper title Mr. Potter and that is an additional two weeks of detention which you will serve or you will see yourself out of this school." Dumbledore said with spittle flying out of his mouth.

"Then you shall call me Lord Potter as I have already requested of you Headmaster Dumbledore." Harry said calmly knowing that if he could keep his temper while the headmaster did a good impression of a rabid dog that would show more than anything else that he was in the right and the article was truthful. "I will not be serving any detentions handed out by you unless supported by two additional professors."

Albus looked smug and turned to his staff, expecting them all to look as incensed as he was. The only one who looked angry was Snape who seemed to have a silencing spell placed on him by one of the other members of staff. "I am sure Professor Snape would second your motion if I allowed him to speak but I will not, and I will not support your motion either," Bill Weasley said as they all noticed he had his wand trained on the livid potions master. As Albus looked to each remaining member of his staff as they all shook their heads saying they would not support the 6 weeks of detention he had tried to impose on Harry.

"Fine," He spat out, "then that will be 500 additional points from Gryffindor and you are forbidden from participating in Quidditch, going to Hogsmead and you are restricted to the Gryffindor Common room." He smirked at Harry as the gasps of the students rang out at the harsh punishment.

“Like I said before the points matter not to me but I will not abide by your restrictions. I was appointed the captain of the Gryffindor Team by the Board of Governors and only they may impose such a ban. I am a member of the Wizengamot and may leave the school as needed to tend to my duties. Additionally as I said before I refuse to adhere to any restrictions you place upon me without the punishment being supported by two additional professors.” Harry was getting tired of fighting with the old man and just wanted to finish breakfast and get to his first class.

“Come on Harry, let’s just finish breakfast and concentrate on classes. Besides we will prove that you are telling the truth next week at the trials.” Hermione said and pulled him down into his seat.

“Yeah, he’s not worth it anyway Harry. Sooner or later everyone will realize what a conniving, manipulative, old goat he is. In the meantime we know the truth, the other professors know the truth and the Board of Governors knows the truth; that’s all that really matters.” Neville added knowing that everyone was still listening to every word. Harry just nodded his thanks at his friends and went back to eating.

Unfortunately for Harry and Hermione the next morning they had potions first thing and Snape was still in a foul mood over Harry’s comments to the Headmaster. Harry had once again made a perfect potion thanks to his increased understanding and training. He loved the looks of loathing that Snape would send him every time he turned in good work. He knew that Snape would try something that morning and had placed a shield around his caldron to protect it from flying objects. Snape walked by and sneered at the mixture before telling Harry it was worthless and trying to vanish it. The shield protected against the spell and Snape stalked off, taking 100 points from Gryffindor for inappropriate use of magic in his classroom.

As Harry handed in his potion Snape picked it up and with a smirk at Harry dropped it on the ground. “I guess that is a zero for the day today Potter,” He sneered.

“No sir,” Harry said handing over another vial, of which the professor intentionally dropped again with a sadistic look of pleasure on his face.

"I'll make sure you fail my class this year boy," Snape sneered. "There is no way you deserved an Outstanding on your OWL. I will figure out how you cheated and then you will be expelled." Harry just silently handed over another vial of his potion and smiled as it bounced on the floor as he had placed an unbreakable charm on the vial.

"I earned my OWL Professor and that potion is brewed correctly as well so it deserves to be graded just like all the other student's potions." Harry stated calmly, knowing that Hermione was watching intently so she could provide this memory as pensive evidence to the Board of Governors.

Snape just glared at Harry more and opened the vial and then vanished the contents. "You can't beat me Potter," he sneered and marked a zero in his grade book for Harry. "Now get out!" He bellowed and the two friends hurried on to their next class, which just happened to be Transfiguration.

"Professor McGonagall," Harry said as he approached his head of house and deputy headmistress. "I would like to file an official complaint against Professor Snape for intentionally sabotaging my school work with intent to damage my grade, chance of graduating and exam results." Harry and Hermione had decided that even if Snape was on their side he still had NO business teaching children. They had been preparing evidence against him to get the Board to fire him.

"May I ask on what grounds please Mr. Potter?" She asked, knowing that the boy in front of her most likely had 5 plus years of memories to back up his claim.

"Yes madam," Harry said and related everything that had taken place in the potions classroom that morning. "That is just one example of things he has done to me over the years. I also believe that he has done this same thing to other students throughout the years, including Neville Longbottom." He then handed her another vial of the potion he had produced that day so she could produce it as evidence.

"I will pass your request to the Board personally after class Mr. Potter." She told him before they started class. "I am sure you will hear from them with a month."

Harry and Hermione left the castle early the morning before Ginny's trial started. They wanted to get there early so they could talk to Madame Bones. Harry would have to testify as well as show pensive memories of events. The pensive memories would prove he was telling the truth rather than risk putting him under truth potion.

Arthur, Bill, Charlie, Percy and the twins were waiting in the atrium when they arrived. The remaining Weasley's wanted to show their support for Harry even if they had to endure hearing all of the crimes of their former family again. "I appreciate your support Mr. Weasley, but you don't have to do this if it is too uncomfortable for you." Harry told him with a sad smile, he hated seeing the normally jolly man look so down.

"I need to see for myself," he told Harry. He was still having problems coming to terms with how horrible his ex-wife and two youngest offspring had turned out. "I still feel responsible for not knowing what they were truly like. I feel as if there was something else I could have done so they would have turned out as good as my other boys."

"I feel horrible for tearing apart your family and allowing them to hurt me. I should have realized things were off much earlier and then maybe we could have worked it out," Harry said sadly.

"Neither of you are to blame," Hermione scolded both of them gently. "I know it hurts and that you wish things had turned out differently but the 'what if' game never did anyone any good. There are five people who are to blame at the moment for this situation. Molly, Ginny and Ron are responsible for their own actions and greed. Dumbledore is highly to blame for suggesting the deception and theft in the first place and Voldemort is responsible for taking Harry's parents away so that he didn't have anyone to protect him from the other four. None of the Weasley's could have prevented this as none of us were aware of it before it had been going on for years. Now, let's all put on our game faces and head into that court room. It won't be easy but we

can all get through this together.” The others just smiled at her speech, feeling better about things now that they were all together.

“Thank you Hermione,” Harry said giving her a grateful hug. “You always seem to know just what to say to get me to feel better.”

Ginny was led into the room in a drab grey jumpsuit from the ministry holding cells. She looked around the room, obviously looking for some way out of her situation. She also seemed to get more scared as she realized there was no one there to help her other than the solicitor that Dumbledore hired for her case. The aged headmaster was sitting off to the side and not on the panel that would be judging her and her heart sank. She had been counting on Dumbledore to be able to influence the vote in her favor. She didn’t realize that his involvement had been brought to light and that he was forbidden from participating in the proceedings as anything other than a material witness.

Molly watched as her daughter was led into the room and was relieved to see that she appeared well fed and decently cared for. She was clean, even if the drab grey jumpsuit didn’t flatter, and she seemed coherent unlike anyone who had been near a dementor for any length of time. She wondered if her son was being treated the same.

The trial went quickly. Bones started off by listing the charges against Ginny, read the deposition of Ginny’s questioning under truth serum and then started with the actual evidence. The court was shown the confiscated bottle of Amorentia, the letters with instructions from Dumbledore and bank statements. They then moved onto corroborating witnesses. They had the potions brewer from Knockturn Alley testify, followed by Harry and then Molly, Dumbledore and Ginny. After all the witnesses were done the panel of Wizengamot members left to discuss the verdict.

“I thought it would take longer,” Harry stated as he followed Arthur to the Ministry Cafeteria for a quick dinner before the verdict was decided. “Muggle trials can stretch on for weeks, sometimes even months.”

“Muggles don’t have truth potion or pensives either; they have to rely on testimony that can’t be proven as truth and hard evidence.” Hermione reminded him.

“Ron’s trial is scheduled to begin following this one,” Bill told them. “I would guess they would wait to start it until tomorrow or maybe until Saturday as so many teachers and students will need to testify.”

“I just want to get this over with,” Charlie sighed. “I need to get back to work.” He loved his new job at the Farm and missed his creatures. “By the way Harry, I have a package for you from Garret. I know there are a few letters from the rest of the staff in there as well.” He handed over a shrunken box with a smile. Harry would open it once he got back to school.

“Ok, here goes,” Hermione said squeezing Harry’s hand as the panel filed back in to give their verdict and then sentencing.

Madame Bones stood to announce the verdict. “Ginerva Molly Grant, you have been found guilty of all charges. The normal punishment for anyone deemed guilty of intentional use of a ministry controlled potion is 5 years minimum in Azkaban. As you are still a minor this court cannot carry out this punishment. Therefore you shall be expelled from Hogwarts without ability to receive a wizarding education, your wand will be snapped, your magical powers will be suppressed and you will be sent to a muggle juvenile detention facility with charms in place so you cannot reveal our world. You will remain at the juvenile facility until the age of 21 and then be released on parole but still without your magic. If at the age of 50 you have not been accused of any additional crimes you may appeal to have your magic released. If at any time during your incarceration you are convicted of another crime you will remain incarcerated until the age of 30 and your parole will be extended until the age of 75.” Bones said as Molly began to wail as Ginny was escorted out of the courtroom.

Ron’s trial was to begin the next day and was sure to go much slower due to having to arrange witness schedules around Hogwarts’ classes. Harry decided he didn’t want to talk about the trial today with

anyone from school and told Hermione that they would just stay at Grimwald. He didn't want to risk running into the headmaster either.

Ron's trial went as smoothly as Ginny's had with the exception that Ron made an even bigger arse out of himself than anyone expected. He was allowed to testify in his own defense and came out sounding worse for it. When his truth serum deposition was read where he had stated that it would have been a bonus if Harry had died the court room had exploded into chaos. The court and public had disliked Ginny for trying to trap and use Harry but they despised Ron for trying to murder their savior because of petty jealousy. A charge of attempted murder was added to the assault charges as well as the other petty charges against him.

The testimonies of Tonks and Draco were damaging but it was Nani who really decided Ron's fate. Her report of the injuries that Harry suffered as well as a diagram of his body showing how if Ron and been a few inches off in his hits he could have succeeded in killing him. Normally goblins were not called to witness but since Harry was a goblin friend and there was a contingent from the goblin nation there to witness the trial they had to allow it. Harry thought it was setting a good precedent with how professional and complete Nani's testimony was.

The panel adjourned for deliberation after the second day of witness testimony. "That went overwhelmingly well," Hermione commented as they were waiting for the verdict. "There is no doubt of his guilt. The real question is how he will be sentenced. I am thinking secure muggle facility for at least 15 years."

"I wouldn't be surprised if they sent him to a juvenile facility like Ginny until he was 25 or something like that." Harry said thinking that Ron would get off easier since he was not yet 17.

"Guess we're about to find out," she said with relief in her voice that it was almost over.

Amelia Bones stood once again to announce the verdict. "Ronald Billius Grant, you have been found guilty of all charges. Your punishment was debated heavily as you are still a minor for a few

more months. Luckily we were able to find an obscure law that allows for harsher punishment for those minors who have completed their OWL examinations. Therefore you shall be expelled from Hogwarts without ability to receive any further wizarding education, your wand will be snapped, your magical powers will be suppressed and you will be sent to an adult muggle detention facility with charms in place so you cannot reveal our world. You are hereby sentenced to 20 years in muggle prison with the option for parole only after 10 years. Your magic will remain bound indefinitely and your status will be changed from wizard to squib.” There were shocked gasps from the crowd at the idea of permanently binding a wizard’s magic. “Be grateful Mr. Grant as there were many on this panel that thought we should send you straight to Azkaban.”

With that announcement Molly collapsed in a faint, not able to handle watching another child hauled out in manacles. Ron was spewing profanities at Harry and anyone else listening, claiming that they would all get what was coming to them and that he had only ever done as the headmaster had said. It seemed that Ron was incapable of accepting his own failings and needed to place the blame on others.

Harry and Hermione said their goodbyes to the Weasleys and headed back to Hogwarts. Harry was actually looking forward to the tediousness of classes after the mentally strenuous past few days.

Chapter 7: Dumbles Gets His Due

There was Dumbledore bashing in the newspapers the next few days as the details from the trials were spreading. The crimes of the once thought leader of the light were quite the discussion topic in the wizarding world. Dumbledore himself was having a hard time dealing with the continuous bad press. He couldn't believe how out of control things were getting. As someone who held tight control over so much for so many years it was not something he could tolerate. The students had lost all remaining respect they had for their headmaster and there were constant whispers when he walked past instead of the awed reverence of years past.

He could finally take no more and stood to address the students three days after the Weasley trials were over. "Attention all students. As there has been little actual school work getting done since the newspapers started printing falsifications we the faculty have hereby decided to ban all newspapers and magazines from the school. Any student caught in possession of said contraband will receive detention and loose house points." Albus sat back down with a smug feeling thinking that he had showed them not to mess with him.

Unfortunately for the headmaster things would not go as swimmingly as he anticipated. Harry nodded to Hermione to stand up, they had been preparing for this eventuality ever since that day in Diagon Alley. "Excuse me Headmaster," Hermione said, just barely polite enough not to get frowned upon. "I have read Hogwarts A History 17 times now and I know that to have any new school rule added, such as this news ban is, you would need either an educational decree from the Ministry or a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote by the rest of the staff. Additionally all new rules have to be presented to the school Board of Governors and posted in all common rooms prior to their discussion at the meeting to give concerned students, parents and alumni time to debate their merit. I am certain that these steps were not followed in this instance and wish to protest this new rule until the proper process is followed."

Dumbledore was fuming as he stood and the students could sense the figurative steam rising from him as he glared at Hermione for all he was worth, benign twinkle completely gone. Hermione for her part just smiled sweetly up at him and the rest of the teachers, most of

whom were applauding her research and aplomb. "You will be silent this instant Miss Granger," he said in a very Snape like sneer. "This rule will stand and will be in effect immediately. The wards on the castle have been altered to not allow post owls directly to students from general sources. All non school, family or personal owls will be redirected to drop their mail and it will be searched before being delivered to you by house elf. You may protest all you want Miss Granger but I am the headmaster of this school and therefore what I say goes, regardless of how many times you have read Hogwarts a History." Hermione just sat down with a shrug, having assumed she would be shot down in the process but knowing that she just made Dumbles dig himself a bigger hole.

Harry and his friends were down early to breakfast the next morning, knowing that there would be fireworks or at least an interesting show at breakfast. "Are you ready to handle all of this Harry?" Neville asked him calmly. "I know he has done nothing but horrible things to you, but is this the best move?"

"I don't know Nev but I do know that he has forced my hand. I let him off lightly before and he walked all over me without changing his ways. He continues to meddle in things he should have no business in and it has to stop. I was hoping to wait to bring him down until after Moldie Voldie was taken care of but he has been quiet where Dumbles has been trying to undermine me at every turn." Harry explained to his friend.

"I just wanted to make sure you're comfortable with this. I know you don't like being center of attention and this will definitely put you in the spotlight." Neville told him. "Even if you don't technically have anything to do with this part of things." He finished that with a smile as he saw the entire board of Hogwarts Governors walk in, along with Madame Bones and a few Aurors.

Talk in the hall stopped as Manuel Zabini walked to the head table where Dumbledore and most of the other staff were sitting. "Albus Dumbledore an official inquiry has been made into your position of Headmaster here at Hogwarts. The board has seen ample evidence to grant a full inquiry which shall commence immediately. Furthermore, you staff member Severus Snape is also under

investigation and we shall perform both inquiries at the same time. All interested parties have been notified and are either present or shall be shortly. You and Snape have one hour to present a list of character witnesses to help support your positions. We shall hold the inquiry here in the Great Hall in full view of any who wish to watch the proceedings.”

Harry was grinning as he took in the astonished look on his hated Potions teachers face. The man seemed completely surprised that he was under investigation; Harry had always thought the man was smarter than that. Dumbledore looked resigned but determined and knew it would be a hard fought few hours and was glad that his friends were all behind him 100 percent.

Harry currently had a list of 18 major grievances against the headmaster and would be addressing 9 of them at the inquiry as they related in one way or another to his failings as headmaster. He would let the others handle all the rest of the more minor grievances over the years, painting a picture of long term abuse of power, complacency and corruption. As Harry was the initial complainant to the Board he was heard from first to list his grievances.

“My list of grievances against Albus Dumbledore is lengthy so I will concentrate on the ones that relate directly to his tenure as Headmaster. First would be that my Hogwarts letter was directed to ‘The Cupboard Under the Stairs’ which to me should have immediately sent up a red flag that there was potential for abuse or neglect. Secondly, when the owl was unable to deliver the letter instead of sending anyone qualified in first contact with muggle raised students, Rubeus Hagrid was sent instead. Now I love Hagrid and he was my very first friend but even he would have to agree that he was not trained or qualified to explain magic to someone who did not know of its existence. I was even more so a special case due to my fame from my scar. I should have had a proper contact person who would have made sure that I received the proper instructions. I was never given the ‘Yes, Magic is Real’ pamphlet as necessitated by the Hogwarts bylaws. Without that I was unaware that I needed to read the Muggle Guide to Wizards, So You Found Out You’re a Wizard?, Magical Heritage, Hogwarts: A History, and a the complete set of Wizarding Starter Books. The knowledge in these books is assumed

to be known by all incoming students and therefore put me immediately at a great disadvantage. Additionally I had no way of knowing how to get through the barrier at Kings Cross.”

“The headmaster was aware that I would not know how to get through the barrier and instead of sending instructions he arranged for me to ‘overhear’ one of his lackeys loudly state the name of the platform once within my hearing range. These lackeys were being paid to befriend me and ensure that I would not want to be placed in Slytherin house or make friends with anyone not sanctioned by the headmaster. I should add that the money they were being paid had been stolen from my very own vaults by the headmaster here.” Harry paused to take a drink of water and to see if his speech was going over well so far.

“Once I was here at school I was not given the cursory 1st year physical exam by Madame Pomfrey. The physical abuse I suffered at the hands of my relatives was virtually ignored. The medical report from my 1st year, made once I received my first injury mind you, reported to Dumbledore signs of abuse, severe malnourishment, stunted growth, eye problems from poor diet, poor muscle tone suggesting prolonged confinement and evidence of multiple crippling injuries that were poorly healed and evidence of multiple concussions and lasting damage to my left lung. The reports from the next years are not as detailed but all report on my poor treatment at the Dursley’s along with suggested courses of treatment that were never even discussed with me that could repair the damage, fix my height problems and improve my eyesight. As you can all tell I have since been under the care of Goblin Healer Nani and she has reversed all the damage from my muggle family. These medical reports are part of my Hogwarts file and therefore had to have been read by the Headmaster and ignored. I am sure I do not need to remind anyone here that at the first sign of any abuse the student is to be questioned and the ministry department of child welfare is to be contacted, neither of which occurred here.”

“In addition to ignoring the physical abuse the headmaster did not see fit to remove the three blocks on my magic that had been placed prior to my parents deaths. It is standard procedure to scan any orphan for signs of magical blocks and have them removed before they begin

magical instruction. Additionally there was a block added by the headmaster himself when I was 5 years old to block accidental wish magic which was also not reported or removed. If that was not bad enough I had two additional blocks placed on my magic one starting school here. The first was added at the end of my 1st year and blocked my natural healing ability, the only thing that kept me alive growing up in an abusive household. This block was placed by Madame Pomfrey and luckily was not placed correctly so that I still had some natural healing or I would have died from other various injuries over the years such as falling from my broom or being bitten by a Basilisk. Then the headmaster himself placed another block on my magic at the end of my 4th year to block all natural mind talents. Once this block was established he then had his pet death eater, I'm sorry I meant Professor Snape mind rape me while attempting to teach me Occlumency. As he had personally placed the block to prevent me from in any way learning Occlumency successfully I find it appalling that he would subject me to the repeated mental assault by Professor Snape under the guise of Occlumency lessons or as I was to inform the other students 'Remedial Potions' lessons."

"Next I would like to point out that every year that I have been a student here there has been at least one attempt on my life. It began in 1st year with Voldemort possessing Quirrel. I have three points of contention with the headmaster on this. First, if he was afraid of Voldemort going after the stone he NEVER should have brought it near a school full of innocent children. Second, with all his natural mind talents he had to have known that Quirrel was possessed. He uses Legilimacy constantly on the students and staff alike so it would not have taken him more than a fleeting glance at the stuttering fool of a DADA professor to know he was at least a death eater and at most realizing he had Voldie sticking out of the back of his head. Third, his supposed protections for the stone were all something that 3 first year students could get by. It is not hard to surmise that he was just setting me up for the confrontation that eventually happened. I would also like to note that I was never offered any counseling after being forced to kill my own teacher and see the spirit of the man who had killed my parents and tried to kill me. I was never given any help coming to terms with those events."

“The next year I was accused by most of the students of being the Heir of Slytherin who was thought to be terrorizing the school. My best friend was petrified but not before helping me realize what the monster was, a basilisk. When I confronted the DADA about it as he was supposed to be the one mounting the rescue he was fleeing from the school and attempted to obliviate me and one other student. I was able to rescue the trapped student with the help of Fawkes and the sorting hat from which I pulled the sword of Gryffindor and was able to slay the basilisk, getting bitten in the process. Fawkes healed me and I was able to destroy the enchanted diary that was possessing the student in question. If Fawkes had not been there to heal me I would have died within minutes from the Basilisk venom. I was then questioned in the headmasters office and not even offered medical attention to ascertain any lasting damage from the giant snake. I also know that the student who was possessed was never offered any medical treatment or counseling and that could be part of the reason that said student is now incarcerated in a muggle juvenile facility. The headmaster could have easily used his Legilimacy ability to determine that she was possessed as well as should have known that Gilderoy Lockheart was a fraud.”

“Third year was the year of dementors. I was attacked on three occasions by dementors while under the care of Hogwarts that year. The first episode was on the Hogwarts express on the way to school and if not for a competent DADA professor riding in the same carriage I would have been kissed. Then during my Quidditch game against Hufflepuff I was surrounded and fed upon by over 50 dementors at once and plummeted over 50 feet to the ground. Then I was attacked by over 100 dementors while they were searching for Sirius Black on the grounds. Instead of trying to kiss him first, the escaped mass murder they believed him to be, they chose to attempt to perform the kiss on me, a should be defenseless 3rd year student. If I had not had Professor Lupin teach me the patronus charm in his spare time I would be dead as well as my friend and sister Hermione and our father Sirius Black. Once again I received no counseling.”

“Fourth year I was entered into the tri wizard tournament by a death eater on polyjuice disguised as Dumbledore’s long time friend and confidant Alastair Moody. I have since reviewed the rules of the tournament and there was no reason I had to participate since I never

entered my own name in the goblet but the headmaster insisted that I was magically bound to participate. I was then injured by a dragon in the first task, was terrified that my two best friends would drown in the lake if I couldn't save them, and then portkeyed to Voldemorts side once myself and Champion Cedric Diggory thought we had won. Cedric was murdered and Voldemort resurrected because Dumbledore didn't pull me from the tournament and couldn't tell the difference between a death eater and his long time friend. I should once again mention that he is a highly skilled Legilimens. Again I was not given immediate medical attention and given no counseling after watching a fellow student be murdered in front of me and being an unwilling participant in a dark ritual."

"Last year was when the headmaster ordered me to be mind raped by Professor Snape as well as refused to help any of the students against the orders of Deloris Umbridge. She tortured the students with detentions using a Blood Quill, a class 3 Dark Object that has been banned by the ministry for over 50 years. I was also administered a dose of veritaserum on the sly by Umbridge which would have either rendered me a squib or killed me outright since she used an entire bottle rather than the maximum recommended dose of 3 drops. Luckily I had no trust for our former professor and only pretended to drink or I would not be here talking with all of you today. This is the same professor who attempted to use the Cruciatus curse on me and set two dementors on myself and my cousin the summer previous necessitating a full trial in front of the Wizengamot for use of underage magic. At the end of the year my godfather Sirius Black was killed while dueling death eaters and I watched his body fall through the death veil in the Department of Mysteries. Once again I was not given any counseling after the closest person to a father I had died in front of me with no body to bury for closure."

"This year the headmaster has taken every opportunity to attempt to punish me unfairly. I believe the rest of this years events will be covered by other complainants and will not go into details. I have to say that without my good friend and now companion Fawkes I would be dead. Headmaster Dumbledore bound Fawkes illegally to him using dark magic. Fawkes was held here against his will for almost 60 years. The reason I was able to summon him to me with the sorting hat was because I was his intended companion. The sorting hat

assisted me because I am the Heir of Hogwarts. Dumbledore knew I was an heir of Gryffindor but did not even disclose that information after I pulled Godric's sword from the hat. I was not informed that only a true heir could call the sword. In fact I was not informed of any of my inheritance although I realize that is not a matter for the Board."

"Dumbledore continued to steal from me to pay students to spy on me, perform illegal tracking spells on me and steal my possessions. He has also done almost irreparable damage to the magical education that students receive here at Hogwarts. He has been able to 'dumb down' the magical population over the years and almost wiped out multiple long standing traditions in our world. That is nothing compared to his fostering the feud between the houses here and blatantly tampering with the Hogwarts system of awarding prefect, heads and captains. I would even stand to suggest that he may have tampered with the sorting hat itself to achieve his aims."

"I hope I was able to paint a vivid enough picture for you of all the missteps Albus Dumbledore has made regarding my health, wealth and education while a students here at Hogwarts. I now I am not the only student he has manipulated over the years and hope that you will rectify the current mistakes and try and keep them from happening again." Harry sat down with a sigh and gulped some more water, never having spoken that long to a group before. He just hoped it would be enough.

Harry was not the only student or even former student that came forward with examples of the years of manipulations by the old man. Draco, Luna, Neville and Hermione spoke as well as students from the past, Cedric's father Amos Diggory, a few of the other professors and even Moaning Myrtle was brought forward to tell her tale. Harry let Arthur and Bill handle painting the picture that Dumbles was responsible for Riddle turning into Voldemort and smiled as things seemed to be going his way.

After all the others were done presenting their cases against Dumbledore Manuel Zabini stood to address a few questions the board had. "Harry, may we ask why you have not pressed charges against Dumbledore?" The entire assembled crowd was curious as

well.

“First of all he is the head of the Wizengamot and has too much clout to be successfully arrested. Second he is still the only wizard that Voldemort ever feared and I was hoping that he would repent and change his ways so that we could keep him here which keeps Voldemort from attacking the school. Third is that I was hoping not to have to reveal all of this as I value my privacy and was wishing it would all just disappear and work itself out without the hassle, wishful thinking.” Harry told them with a shrug.

“What punishment would you desire him to receive?” Zabini asked curious again.

“I would love to see him sent penniless and helpless to relatives that hate his guts and he would be forced to be their house elf and be starved or beaten when he messed up...in other words exactly what he did to me.” Harry said and the crowd was silent as they realized just how much damage their thought leader of the light had done to their savior their ‘Boy-Who-Lived’. “Honestly thought as long as the old goat is out of my hair where he can’t harm me or influence others to do so I don’t care what his punishment is. I am just tired of fighting a war on two different fronts. I don’t want to fight at all actually I just want to try and be a normal teenager but that has never been allowed.”

Everyone took a break for lunch while the Board of Governors decided on what to do about Dumbledore. Harry just sat quietly at his place between Neville and Hermione. He was talked out and emotionally spent and the day was not even halfway over. “We need to do something fun,” Neville suggested. “Everyone has long faces and feels down in the dumps. Perhaps some Gred and Forge mayhem?”

“I read about a charm that would be kind of neat to use,” Hermione mentioned casually and both boys instantly had their full attention on their usually strait laced friend. Hermione smiled to herself as she watched Harry start to pull himself out of his funk. She didn’t like pranks on principal but if her pulling a prank would make Harry less

depressed it would be worth it. "It's a partial sticking charm. It only works part of the day and lasts for 12 hours. So if we were to say charm everyone's shoes they would randomly stick to the floor for a bit, then unstuck and then randomly stick again for half the day."

"Absolutely brilliant," Harry said with a grin. "We should get started right away." He knew that Hermione was only participating because she thought it would make him feel better and he was glad that she was trying. If nothing else the talk of pranks took his mind off of Dumbledore for a few minutes.

It did not take the Board very long to decide on a course of action. The Headmaster had been removed temporarily once before by them and again last year by the Ministry. Manuel Zabini waited until the lunch hour was over before leading the Board back into the Great Hall for their verdict. He stood to get everyone's attention, noticing that Dumbledore did not look in the least bit concerned. The only two people in the room that looked concerned about the Headmaster were Professors Hagrid and Snape.

"I want to thank each of you who spoke for bringing your concerns before the Board. I would also like to apologize to all those who have been wronged over the years. We the Board of Governors for Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry do hereby find Headmaster Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore is no longer acting in the best interest of the school and students of Hogwarts. He is thus removed as Headmaster effective immediately. He shall have the rest of the day to collect his belongings and leave the grounds. We furthermore declare that no Education Decree from the Ministry of Magic will allow Mr. Dumbledore to be reinstated as Headmaster. Professor Minerva McGonagall will assume temporary Headmistress duties until a permanent candidate can be determined by the Board."

Harry had to keep himself from jumping up and down cheering as the decree left the room speechless for a moment. Dumbledore's expression quickly turned from shock to anger and he rounded on Harry and was about to start yelling when he was silenced from behind by Amelia Bones. "Leave Mr. Potter alone Albus and accept your punishment like a man. You were caught with you hand in the

cooking jar and your manipulations are far reaching this is no one's fault but yours."

"We will now begin the inquiry into the teaching practices of Severus Snape resident Potions Master, Professor and Head of Slytherin House." Zabini said with a sigh, realizing it was going to be a long afternoon as he knew almost every student in the school hated Snape.

"May I request an audience in private with the Board, Lord Potter and the Temporary Headmistress before the proceeding begin?" Snape asked in his most pleasant tones. Harry just shrugged at Zabini wondering what his most hated professor would have to say that needed to stay private. The Board filed into the antechamber the hall with Snape, Harry and McGonagall following to hear whatever Snape had to say.

"I cannot justify my actions in this school without violating an Oath of Loyalty that I was coerced into swearing. Furthermore my life will be forfeit in court if I do so much as try. Please reconsider this inquest today and assist me in overcoming my Oath so I may become a better Professor as well as answer your inquiry." Snape told them, Harry having never seen him look so humble in his life.

"That bastard," Minerva swore in her Scottish brogue. "I will talk with Amelia about this and see if there is any legal recourse for you Severus."

"Harry do you want to continue today or wait until we determine the types of Oaths the professor here is under?" Zabini asked him.

"I will postpone the inquiry if you can assure me that my potions work will not be graded by him until after the inquiry is held. I would prefer to have a substitute teacher until then but will settle for at least my grade no longer being in jeopardy." Harry said. "I would also request to be given copies of the results of the testing for the oaths so I can better prepare my statements for the inquiry in light of the new information."

“You will be graded by an independent Ministry source who we can call in to substitute if it turns out this process will take more than a week. You will be given copies of the pertinent information for the inquiry.” Zabini assured him and Harry just nodded and headed back out to his friends so they could at least celebrate Dumbledore’s defeat. If he had to wait another week or two to take Snape down too that was fine with him.

Chapter 8: Picking Up the Pieces

“So Snape is claiming that Dumbledore made him do all the bad things under a loyalty oath?” Neville said with a whistle. “I don’t know what’s worse, him doing it on his own or on Dumbles orders.”

“We’ll find out just what the orders were before we think about letting the bat off the hook. I’m sure he was placed under a loyalty oath, but that doesn’t mean it had anything to do with how he treated all of us.” Harry reminded his friends. They were in the library researching loyalty oaths. Hermione wanted to know as much about them as possible before the results from Snape were back.

The Board of Governors was still at the school conducting investigations into the actions of the other professors and staff as well. Filtch had been let go immediately after ranting to the board that the only way to handle misbehaving students was using chains in the dungeons. The search for a caretaker was underway but not immediately necessary as the house elves had everything under control. Madame Pomfrey had been examined and three different charms removed from her. She had been placed under an oath of silence concerning Harry’s care, an oath of obedience to the Headmaster and a memory charm from when she was forced to bind Harry’s natural healing magic. Poppy was spending the next week at St. Mungo’s to make sure all the tampering had been discovered.

As soon as the charms on Pomfrey were discovered, all the other teachers were examined as well. Every single professor had either an oath of obedience or an oath of loyalty to Albus Dumbledore. Minerva had also had an oath of compulsion that made her report everything to Albus. Hagrid also had a block added to his magic by Dumbledore after his expulsion. The healers told him it was too dangerous to his health to remove it after so long. The fact that he was able to do any magic at all was a testament to how strong his magical core is.

After the rest of the revelations the school was in a sort of limbo. The Headmaster’s removal shocked many, even with all the press about the things that he had done. The sheep of the wizarding world were starting to get scared again and were beginning to pull their children from Hogwarts out of fear of the Death Eaters.

"Yes hurry pull your children from school because the great manipulator Dumbledore is gone," Harry grumbled the next morning as a mother of a 2nd year Hufflepuff literally was dragging her daughter out of the great hall. "I'm sure your household wards are strong enough to stand up to Death Eaters. I'm sure your capable of defending yourself and your underage kids. Don't worry that you're ruining your kids academic future, no who cares if they will know enough magic to get jobs once they are old enough." Harry was not being quiet about his comments and a few of the frantic parents were just goggling at him.

"Don't worry about it Lord Potter," Draco said as he wandered over to the brooding hero. "The world will always need tavern wenches and janitors. They are just making a choice on the quality of life they want their children to lead. I did hear they are looking for a new conductor on the Knight Bus still, perhaps one of these dropouts will be able to handle that job."

There were no more students pulled out the rest of the day as the staff had started speaking with the parents as soon as they were on the grounds. Apparently none of them had thought through their actions and were just scared. Dumbledore had made a comment to the press that now that he was gone, none of the students were safe at Hogwarts anymore. That without him there to protect the students the castle would fall. Harry just mumbled about sheep the rest of the day as he tried to focus on his school work.

Lord Voldemort was very happy. His nemesis Albus Dumbledore had been defeated by a mere child. The victory was sweet as it was the old fools own actions that brought him down. He had waited years and years for someone to notice the old man's deceptions and lies. He had done everything in his power to show how corrupt Albus Dumbledore had been, but no one had listened. They painted him the enemy at Dumbledore's bidding and sent him down his path of destruction.

Tom Riddle never intended to become a Dark Lord bent on destruction and power but his fight with Dumbledore turned him into the monster that all fear. He gave up his humanity in an attempt to

become immortal. He would outlive all his enemies and then they would see the light. All was going his way until he was tricked into trying to kill the Potter brat. He knew that Harry Potter was just a normal child with extremely good luck. Dumbledore had made sure that his Death Eater Snape heard just enough of the damn prophecy to lead him to Potter. He knew it had all gone wrong as he felt his spirit being pulled from his body. Dumbledore had used Potter as a weapon against him and continued to do so... but no longer. The war had nothing to do with Harry Potter and unless the brat got in his way again he would leave the whelp alone. After all the child had done what he had been unable to do and revealed Dumbledore's flaws to the world. Tom's next move would be to show the world the real Dumbledore. The manipulative man who tried to use him his entire childhood just to get his hands on a Founder's Heir.

Hermione approached McGonagall after class. "Headmistress," she said with a smile. "A few of us students have a request. We would like to have a Halloween Party. It would be for all years with everyone dressing up in costume, a costume contest and then the feast and a dance for the older years afterwards."

"We hope to promote unity throughout the houses," Susan Bones said having helped Hermione with the plans so far. "We believe the school is at a crucial point right now. If we do nothing it will return to how it was, fractured and mean spirited. This is our chance to untie together and form bonds of friendship across blood lines and social class." Hermione was impressed with Susan's speech and glad that she had recruited her.

"Very well ladies. You have my permission. You will have everything planned out to present at the next prefect meeting." McGonagall smiled at the two as they hurried out of her classroom chattering away about their plans. She had never seen Hermione so open and carefree before and wondered just how many other students had been adversely affected by Albus for so long. She wondered now what her life would have been like if she had not taken the position as his apprentice all those years ago. She shook her head, she had way too much going on to feel sorry for herself! She had new teachers to interview and classes to overhaul and years and years of Albus' messes to get sorted out.

Harry was intently studying a large roll of parchment that had arrived at breakfast. They were the results of the tests done on Snape. He had been under a oath of loyalty and they were able to break it a St. Mungo's as he never agreed to take the oath. They actually found that he was under three different oaths of loyalty, two oaths of obedience and an oath of servitude. With so many oaths it would be hard to know what he was under oath to do and what he just said he was under oath to do. The recommendation from the DMLE was to question him under truth potion. It would be able to see through what was oath induced and what was not.

Harry was already making up a list of questions he wanted asked. Snape would have to agree to the questioning otherwise it would prove that his oaths didn't dictate his behavior. Harry was looking forward to finding out just how much a creep Snape truly was. He promised Hermione that he would keep an open mind if it somehow came to light that Snape was not to blame.

The inquest was kept quiet and only a few were allowed to observe. The first questions were who applied the oaths and when.

Loyalty: Eileen Prince (age 8), Tom Riddle (age 17), Albus Dumbledore (age 19)

Obedience: Tom Riddle (age 17), Albus Dumbledore (age 31)

Servitude: Tom Riddle (age 35)

Snape then expressed that he took the dark mark of his free will at the age of 17, while still in school and due to his hatred of James Potter and the Marauders. He was promised that they would be eliminated shortly after graduation. He turned to Dumbledore when he found out that the prophesy referred to Lily's son and didn't want her accidentally hurt. The fact that he had a life debt to James Potter was enough reason to convince the old man that he was telling the truth. They oaths of loyalty never told him to be a horrible teacher, or to favor his house over the others in the years before Harry attended. All the complaints from prior to the oath of obedience being added prior to Harry's 1st year would stand. Dumbledore used the

obedience oath to make sure Snape was obviously favoring his Slytherins over Harry. He never was instructed to lower Harry's grade, belittle his dead parents or harp on the other students in Harry's year and house. His treatment of Neville was all entirely his own, not tied to any oath. The servitude oath that Riddle forced him into retaking after his rebirth was only ever enforced on Death Eater raids. After another hour of questions the DMLE had an entire list of Death Eater activities he was involved with or led as well as the small number that he sabotaged or reported to the Order of the Phoenix. The last question was, "Who are you loyal to?" and his answer was "Only to myself."

Harry smiled grimly as he digested that Snape was guilty. The man was a true Slytherin as no one ever really knew to what side he belonged. It was just a shame that he ruined so many students career hopes by being such a horrible teacher. He had been surprised at the number of questions they asked and wondered if the DMLE was finally getting things under control and perhaps in the future there could be such a thing as a fair trial.

"Are you excited?" Hermione asked as they stood outside the new potions classroom on the 2nd floor. The temporary instructor from the ministry brewing labs had insisted that the classroom be moved to a more suitable location and now they were about to have their first Snape free class.

"I don't really know what to think. It's almost like 1st year all over again!" He told her and they laughed before walking in and finding seats in the room. There was plenty of natural light streaming in the large windows and their workstations were set up more like muggle chemistry benches than medieval potions workstations.

"Good morning class, my name is Meghan O'Bryan and I am a class 1A potions brewer for the Ministry of magic. I am still completing my studies and hope to earn my Potions Mastery in the next two years. I will be here the rest of the year to help you learn the wonderful science that is potions. I realize that many of you were hindered by the previous instructor and I will be holding review sessions and open labs where I will be available for questions and to let you get more brewing time." The young professor looked to be in her mid to late

twenties and looked like a typical red headed Irish lady. She was pale and freckled but her hair was more a strawberry blonde compared to the bright Weasley red. Her smile was contagious and Harry felt that finally he may be able to learn something in a potions class.

“She was wonderful!” Hermione almost cooed as they left the classroom. Not a single person would contradict her either. Professor O'Bryan was fair and helpful and wouldn't take any crap. She stopped Pansy from throwing extra ingredients into Hermione's caldron and made sure the class knew of her zero tolerance policy on sabotage.

“We'll have to let Neville know that she is offering extra lessons to those who didn't take the class due to Snape.” Harry said as they both knew that Neville would be great at potions if given a chance. He was a walking encyclopedia of Herbology knowledge so potions was only hard for him due to Snape.

“We don't have the funding to have a dance,” Ravenclaw Head Boy Tony Stewart told all of them.

“It appears that our former Headmaster has been stealing from more than just Harry Potter. The school funds are almost completely gone for the year. Infact we will not be able to decorate for the feast or for Chirstmas this year.” Hufflepuff Head Girl Tonya Thompson said. “If we want to have a dance we will have to have the students pay to get in.”

“We can't charge the students enough to pay for a band. A half galleon might seem like a lot per person but that would just barely cover the decoration costs.” Tony told them.

“What other areas did that bastard steal from?” Neville asked with a growl. “How come none of this was made public, he should be arrested for this. Parents would be outraged.”

“He took all remaining money from every account available to him. The only accounts that remain untouched is the food budget, the cleaning budget and the medical budget. Pomfrey is in charge of the medical budget and the house elves are in charge of the rest otherwise we would all be starving the rest of the year.” Tonya told

them with a sour look on her face. "All outside activities will have to stop as there is nothing else left until next year's fees come through."

"This is not right," Hermione said to everyone. "We should not have to suffer for what that horrible man did anymore. I say we write an article to the paper with this news, ask for concerned alumni to donate to the cause. We can even go so far as to say that anything we raise above and beyond the lost budget will go to help a charity. There are plenty of former students out there who have extra cash, lets just see if they are willing to help."

"Sort of a 'Save the Students' kind of thing then?" Justin asked and they all got started planning. The 7th years would be in charge of the budgets, what is missing from were and how much they need to survive the year, the 6th years would take care of the article and the press while the 5th years took ideas from the rest of the students and staff. They were not going to go down without a fight and many thought that this is just the kind of thing to help bring unity to the school. It was ALL students that had been stolen from, no matter their house or heritage they would lose out if something didn't happen.

The headlines about Albus Dumbledore embezzling money from Hogwarts rocked the nation. Across the country angry parents were demanding action be taken immediately against the aged former headmaster. Dark and Light side alike were livid that their children would have to suffer for his crimes. The money started pouring into the school almost as soon as the article was released. The Weird Sisters had offered to play at the Halloween Dance for free, the Wizarding Wireless Network and offered to set up a magical type DJ booth in the great hall and teach the prefects to run it. Donations and offers of free or discounted goods were coming in from a seemingly endless source.

Harry was enjoying the chaos around him that for once was not due to him. He had just suggested that McGonagall ask a goblin to oversee the incoming donation and now he was sitting comfortably in a nice office with three goblins as they kept up to date with the flood of donations. Ragnok had sent him a thank you card for suggesting the goblins help. Supposedly even a few of the bank customers had been nicer to their goblin tellers and one even thanked them for

helping out at Hogwarts. Harry the Goblin friend was just glad that things seemed to be heading on a better path. He knew it was too much to hope that Voldemort and his lap dogs would hold off the war indefinitely but he would enjoy any peace possible for as long as it would last.

Chapter 9: Halloween Party

With the donated funds there was nothing stopping them from having a great Halloween party. The prefects were all busy with the planning and the entire school was excited. Even the younger years were looking forward to the party as they were at least able to participate in the costume contest and the feast before the dance for the older years. The talk of the school was what to dress up as, if they were buying or making their costume and who was taking who to the dance.

Hermione had offered her and Harry's help to any younger students who needed help transfiguring their costumes. This spurred a rush of younger students approaching the older ones for help and even the professors. When two Slytherin second years approached Hermione at breakfast to help them with their costumes the entire school paused for a moment at the strange sight. Draco had just shrugged later when Harry asked him why he didn't help the students himself.

"They never asked me, even though I have offered to help. I guess they all know that Hermione is good at transfiguration as well as they wanted muggle costumes and probably assumed that I don't know anything about them." Draco offered when Harry pressed him for an explanation. "Besides, you can't tell me that seeing two pure-blood Slytherins approaching a muggle-born Gryffindor for help wasn't the strangest sight you've seen in the Great Hall."

"True, I guess this whole house unity thing is really starting to work. This doesn't mean that I won't kick your arse in Quidditch though." Harry told him with a grin.

"You can surely try," Draco said with a smirk and walked away.

"What are you going to dress up as?" Neville asked Harry that night as they were heading up to their dormitory. "I don't really have any good ideas yet."

"I haven't given it too much thought either," Harry confessed. "Are you taking anyone to the dance?"

“Nah, I figure if I don’t have to have a date then I can dance with whomever,” Neville told him. “Besides, asking a girl out is almost impossible with how they travel in giggling groups.”

“I hear you,” Harry said with a laugh. “I just don’t have my eye on anyone right now. I mean there are lots of nice and pretty girls but none that I want to date. If I did ask someone they would most likely assume I wanted to be their boyfriend. I have enough fan girls as it is.”

“What about Hermione? You two seem to be getting really close.” Neville asked.

“Nah, she’s like my sister or something. Besides, I think Dudley has a thing for her and I’d be afraid I’d ruin my friendship with both of them if I asked her out.” Harry explained. “Why, do you like her?”

“Not like that,” Neville told him. “Nah, the only girl I have my eye on at the moment is Susan Bones. I like her hair; I have a thing for redheads.” Harry just laughed as that explained why he had asked Ginny to the Yule Ball in 4th year.

“My dad had a thing for redheads as well,” Harry told him with a devious smirk. “Maybe you should go to the party as him and I can talk to Hermione and have her convince Susan to go as my mum!”

“People would just think I was you anyway,” Neville pointed out. “Besides I was thinking of something a bit more ‘cool’ than going as your dad. Maybe I’ll go as a pirate or a knight or a Musketeer... something with a sword for sure, girls dig swords.”

Harry just laughed and they discussed potential costumes for a while longer. Harry thought that showing up dressed as Voldemort would be amusing but Neville vetoed that idea by reminding him that there would be 1st years at the party and it’s not nice to scare the little kids.

The next morning at breakfast the Daily Prophet reported that Dumbledore had been arrested for his numerous crimes and that his trial would be held sometime in November once they had gathered all the evidence. They gave a preliminary list of crimes that was over 50

items long including his crimes against Harry, Hogwarts and the staff and Order members.

"I think he's going to jail for sure," Harry said with a grin. "This is just the preliminary list of crimes and now that there is no public support of him the Wizengamot would be idiots not to treat him like any other criminal. I wonder how long the trial will take with all these crimes."

"I'm glad he is being made to pay for his crimes finally," Hermione said. "I still can't believe that he stole from Hogwarts on top of everything else. If he had kept his greedy paws out of the school funds he may have not have been arrested. It turned out for the best though because the school is really starting to unite. I have never seen so many students talking with those from other houses before."

"Having Snape gone really helps as well," Neville said. "That man was like a stubborn weed that once eliminated the garden was able to grow again." The others just smiled at another accurate plant comparison.

Very little actual learning got done the day of Halloween as the students were all looking forward to the party that night. Most of the professors realized this and had more fun classes. In transfiguration Professor McGonagall showed them all how to transfigure things into Halloween decorations and helped anyone with last minute costume problems. In charms Professor Flitwick was showing everyone how to enchant objects to fly like the charmed bats in the great hall. Remus was enjoying teaching everyone the Batbogey hex and the counter charm. The other professors were all teaching Halloween inspired topics as well.

Harry and Neville hurried up to their dorm with Seamus and Dean so they could get ready for the party. Neville and Hermione had to be there early to finish set-up and the rest of them would join them when dinner started. The four had all taken Neville's advice of girls liking swords to heart. Neville was going as a pirate captain, Dean was a ninja, Seamus was a Viking and Harry had decided to go as a Gladiator. They were having a fake sword fight in the middle of the common room when the girls came down. The 6th year girls from Gryffindor and Hufflepuff had decided to go as Disney Princesses.

Hermione looked very pretty as Belle from Beauty and the Beast. Lavender was Princess Aurora from Sleeping Beauty and Parvarti was Princess Jasmine from Aladdin. Susan Bones was going as Ariel from the Little Mermaid with her red hair, Hannah Abbot was Cinderella and Megan Jones was Snow White. All 6 girls were very happy with how well their costumes turned out.

Harry burst into laughter when the 7th year Gryffindor's entered the Great Hall for dinner. They were all dressed as characters from the TV show The Flintstones. Katie Bell was Wilma, her friend Leanne was Pebbles and their roommate was Betty Rubble. Geoffrey and Riche from the Quidditch team were Fred and Barney and their roommate was Bam-Bam, overall they looked like they were having a great time. Not to be outdone the entire 4th year Gryffindors had also chosen a theme and were all superheroes: Wonder Woman, Supergirl, Batgirl and Spiderman, Batman and Superman. The best group of costumes, in Harry's opinion, was the Gryffindor 3rd years. He had helped all of them with their costumes and just kept smiling at the characters from the 'Wizard of Oz' movie. Natalie McDonald was Dorothy, Dennis Creevy the scarecrow, Trevor Logan the Tin man and Jimmy Peaks the Cowardly Lion. Natalie's two roommates were Glenda the Good Witch and the Wicked Witch of the West.

Hermione was proud of all the work she had done to help all the 1st and 2nd year girls. Every single one of them was dressed in a different Muggle Witch costume. There were all kinds of variations and it was amazing to see all the cute little witches dressed up how muggles imagined witches. The 7th year Ravenclaws were all dressed as Nymphs. Cho Chang was the autumn nymph, her friend Marietta was the water nymph, Morag McDougal was the spring nymph and their other roommate was the summer nymph. The 4 girls were quite good looking and many boys were already drooling and making plans to ask the nymphs to dance.

The Hufflepuff 7th years and the 6th year boys were decked out in Star Wars costumes. Head Girl Tonya Thompson was Princess Leia, Justin Finch-Fletchly was Obi-Wan, Ernie McMillan was C3P0, Zach Smith was Darth Vader, Wayne Hopkins was Chewbacca, and the three 7th year boys were dressed as Luke Skywalker, Han Solo and

R2D2. The Hufflepuff 3rd years were all dressed as Scooby-Doo characters.

The Slytherin 7th year girls were all dressed as different types of Fairies. There was a water, earth, air and fire fairy. The three 7th year boys were dressed up as the Three Musketeers. Draco was dressed up as Prince Charming while Crabbe was a mummy, Goyle was a zombie and Nott was a vampire. Blaise Zabini and the 6th year girls were all dressed as Greek gods. Blaise was Zeus, Pansy Parkinson was Hera, Daphne Greengrass was Athena, Tracy Davis was Venus, and Millicent Bultstrode was Medusa.

The professors were all dressed up as well. The students kept staring the head table finding it hard to believe the costumes their professors were able to put together. Harry wasn't the only one chuckling at Remus being dressed as the Big Bad Wolf with Tonks dressed as Little Red Riding Hood. Bill Weasley was dressed as Robin Hood and many girls could be heard offering to be his Maid Marion. Professors Lambert and Vance had dressed up as Cleopatra and Mark Anthony. The Art Professor Emeris was a perfect replica of Frankenstein. Hermione thought that the Headmistress dressed up as Queen Elizabeth was perfect but Harry preferred Professor Flitwick dressed up as a goblin warrior. Neville was of course partial to Professor Sprout dressed up as Mother Earth. Most of the boys in the school though liked Professor O'Bryan dressed as a Celtic Princess; her pale skin and strawberry blonde hair made her look like she truly could have been a princess.

Professor Vector was dressed up as the evil Disney queen Malificent and could be seen glaring at the 6th year girls dressed up as Disney princesses. Hagrid was hilarious as the Jolly Green Giant. Firenze was also amusing dressed as a unicorn; he had charmed himself white and attached a fake unicorn horn to his forehead. Madame Hooch looked oddly normal dressed as an airline pilot, although the irony was quite funny. Madame Pomfrey had also gone for irony and was dressed as a muggle surgeon.

Harry almost spit out his dinner when half-way through the feast Professor Trelawney entered the hall with one of her crystal balls and informed the headmistress that she had seen that she should join the

feast. McGonagall had snorted and then informed Sybil that her Gypsy costume was quite inspired and conjured a chair at the table for her. The reason Harry almost sprayed Hermione with his food was when his normally reserved friend commented that the headmistress' comment was "An insult to all Gypsy's." The fact that Trelawney had not dressed up at all was amusing to most who heard the headmistress.

When dinner was over a ballot appeared in front of each plate so that the students could vote on the best costumes. Each student would vote for their overall favorite as well as their favorites from each year. After dessert was finished the winners would be announced and then the younger years would have to head back to their common rooms so the older students could enjoy their dance.

The overall winners were announced first and surprisingly both winners were teachers it was Professor Emeris as Frankenstein that won the overall male costume and Professor McGonagall that won the overall girl costume. Draco won the award for best 6th year boy costume and Hannah Abbot won the 6th year girls costume which was amusing as they were dressed as Cinderella and Prince Charming. Cho Chang was the 7th year girl winner. Bill Weasley won for male professor along with Professor O'Bryan. Harry was disappointed that his 3rd year Gryffindor friends were beat out by the Hufflepuffs. Overall the feast and costume contest were well received and everyone enjoyed themselves.

The dance began directly after the younger years left the hall. The winners from the costume contest had to dance first and then the prefects but then the music sped up as the Weird Sisters took over for a while. Harry had realized over the summer that dancing, not including ballroom dancing was fun and was out on the floor bouncing between partners. He and Neville danced with almost every single girl at the party. Hermione danced with the boys that asked her but was more amused watching her two best friends make their way through the girls of Hogwarts. She was sure that both Harry and Neville danced with more girls than any of the other boys.

“What happened to the Potter who couldn’t dance and was horrible with girls?” Draco asked Harry when they were both getting a drink at the same time.

“He went to Quidditch camp and realized that it wasn’t as hard as it looked.” Harry offered as a response. “Besides if girls in tiny clothing ask me to dance what kind of guy would I be to turn them down?” He called back as Cho changed and drug him back to the dance floor. She and her fellow 7th years proceeded to make a ‘Harry Sandwich’ with him in the middle and all of them dancing around him. Draco just shook his head at the strangeness of it all and went to find one of the Princesses to dance with, anything to avoid Pansy.

Chapter 10: Attack on the Village

Albus Dumbledore was angrier than he had ever been. He was being held in the Ministry holding cells awaiting trial for all his crimes over the years. He couldn't understand how things had gotten so out of control. He was enraged that the people of the wizarding world no longer were treating him as a god. He was supposed to be their hero, their savior, the one they went to with any concerns. He was the only one who could run the wizarding world, they needed him!

Lord Voldemort was plotting. He could not make up his mind on if he wanted to raid the Ministry of Magic during the old fool's trial and kill the former headmaster while he was tied up or if he wanted to duel the man to prove that he was more powerful. The more deviant of his Death Eaters were getting anxious to go out and cause death and destruction. The man formerly known as Tom Riddle was torn. His actions throughout his life had caused most of his soul to blacken and his heart to harden. He was so deep into dark magic that he was dependent on it. He couldn't just stop being a Dark Lord and that left him at an impasse. He had always wanted to change the wizarding world and now that it was changing he was trying to refrain from destroying it but his dark nature was working against him.

To vent his frustrations he took many of his followers on a raid in the muggle world. He and his followers destroyed an entire neighborhood of homes and businesses as well as killed and tortured many. The screams of the dying no longer held the appeal that they once did yet at the same time it felt as if he was in more control of his magic after casting the killing curse.

Many of the less fanatical Death Eaters were less enthusiastic about the raid. One of the newest recruits just watched in horror as two of his comrades forced two muggle brothers to beat each other to death using the Imperious curse. When that death eater did not show up for the next meeting and was not instantly hunted down and killed, many more death eaters began to defect. The Dark Lord knew he was losing followers but he couldn't bring himself to care. He knew something was wrong with him; in fact his magic had been fluctuating since he stopped cursing wizards.

He began making plans for attacking Dumbledore's trial. He had decided it presented too promising a target to pass up on even if he was in favor of the general changes in the wizarding world. It was just too little too late and his soul was marred forever.

Harry was curious on why he was being called to the Headmistress' office. He began to get a bad feeling when he noticed who was waiting for him there.

"Lord Potter," Amelia Bones said with a solemn tone. "I am afraid that Albus Dumbledore has escaped Ministry custody. He overpowered three guards and collapsed the wards on the holding cells earlier today."

"What is being done to find him?" Harry asked, his mind quickly going over any place he could think the old man would choose to hide. He was worried that the manipulative old man would come after him now that he was free.

"The newspapers will announce his escape tomorrow morning and outline how dangerous he is. I will also be holding a press conference tonight that will be carried live by the WWN." She told him sadly. "I thought I should tell you in person so that you would be on your guard. It seems you now have to look over your shoulder twice as much. The two most powerful wizards in our world are after you Lord Potter and I am afraid that we are little equipped to help you."

"Thank you for letting me know Madame Bones. I will keep two eyes peeled for the Old Goat as I do for Moldy Shorts and his Death Munchers." Harry told her as he was already thinking of more wards he could use to make sure he stayed safe.

"His trial will proceed as scheduled with him in absentia. When he is found guilty, and I promise you he will be, we will be able to move him straight to Azkaban when we catch him. It is much more secure and should be able to hold him. I am currently in negotiations with the Goblins to get them to re-ward the high security wing to contain someone of his power. When we find him he will be punished." She told him.

“Good,” Harry said and then headed back to his common room to talk to his friends about the newest development.

Voldemort was livid. He had cursed the death eater that brought him the news that Dumbledore escaped. He called all his death eaters and gave every one of them orders to go out and find the former headmaster. The Dark Lord wanted vengeance and he could not do that without first destroying his enemy. He decided he would need a new target, one sure to draw out the old man.

The wizarding world was shocked that Dumbledore escaped, not because they didn't think him capable of it, but because most still believed he was good at heart and had only committed those crimes for the 'greater good.'

Harry and his friends were excited about the upcoming Hogsmead weekend. They usually had one around Halloween but with the inquiry by the Board of Governors it had been postponed until early November. Neville was the only one nervous about the day as he had worked up the courage to ask Susan Bones to the village. They had danced quite a few times together at the dance and he decided that he had a shot. The two would have the morning to themselves and then meet up with Harry and Hermione for lunch and then wander around town.

Susan and Neville had a great time that morning and were both thinking that they should start to date. Susan was lost in thought as they made their way to the Three Broomsticks to meet Harry and Hermione. She was so into her thoughts that she didn't immediately notice the 20 or so death eaters that appeared in the village around them. Her first indication that anything was wrong was when Neville roughly shoved her out of the way of a green jet of light heading her way.

Neville had been alert the entire time, having taken Harry's and Moody's Constant Vigilance to heart. He saw the nearest death eater to them recognize Susan and send a killing curse at her. As the niece of the Head of the DMLE she was a prime target and he knew he needed to protect her. After pushing her clear of the curse, which he

noted with some satisfaction hit another death eater instead, he drew his wand and began fighting back.

Harry and Hermione heard the commotion and quickly ran outside to help. Harry alerted the Order while leaving so they would know to send help. He constantly kept the Order medallion, fashioned after their DA galleons, in his pocket in case of emergency. Hermione quickly saw that Neville was fighting back and hurried over to help him as he was outnumbered. Other members of the DA began fighting back while some focused on making sure everyone was alright. The third and fourth years were barricaded in the Three Broomsticks while the older students attempted to thwart the Death Eaters.

Voldemort was waiting on the outskirts of town for Dumbledore to show himself. He knew the old man well enough to know that he would be watching Potter in Hogsmead. Sure enough just a moment or two after his minions began the attack he spotted the old man drop his disillusionment spell on the other side of the town. The Dark Lord quickly apparated to him and they began to duel.

"I knew you couldn't resist showing up to spy on the children," Voldemort taunted. "Now you will realize your mistakes and I will make you pay."

"You cannot win Tom," The manipulative old man said. "I am the most powerful wizard that has ever lived. I am the leader of the light and I will defeat you once and for all and the people will love me once again!" Dumbledore shouted; signs of dementia obvious on his face. Gone were the twinkling, grandfatherly eyes and in their place the calculating eyes of one too absorbed in themselves.

It didn't take long for the Order and the Ministry Aurors to show up to help the students. Many were surprised to see the two most powerful wizards fighting and were too busy watching to help. The death eaters quickly realized they were outnumbered and tried to head towards their master. Many just disappeared to avoid getting caught, even with risking the wrath of the Dark Lord.

Soon the tides had turned as the Aurors attempted to capture both wizards still dueling. As both Dark Lord and self proclaimed Light Lord realized they were outnumbered they fled, Voldemort taking his remaining servants with him.

Harry had taken down at least a half dozen death eaters before the ministry arrived as he attempted to get closer to where he could see Dumbledore and Voldemort dueling. He was hoping to use their destruction to take out one or both of them. The Order and the Aurors arrived before he was able to do more than throw a few cutting curses at the two.

The uninjured students were all escorted back to the castle while the Ministry began the cleanup from the battle. Hermione was attempting to calm an irate Harry down while Neville was comforting a still shaken Susan. Hermione finally lost her temper. "Harry shut up!" She yelled at him, causing him to stop mid rant. "Look around you, there are others who are hurt and scared. Stop thinking about yourself and help your fellow students who are not used to having people try to kill them!"

Harry paused and thought about what she said and realized she was right, as usual. It didn't matter really if he wasn't able to take out either of the idiots who were after him. The important thing was that the students were protected and he knew that he was needed to help regain the calm of the school. He saw that Susan was still shaking and looked around to see many other students in a state of semi-shock as well as many others looking terrified and many in tears.

"Will you be alright Susan?" Harry asked her kindly once he realized that she was basically ignoring Neville. "Are you hurt anywhere? Should we take you to the hospital wing or call your aunt?"

That snapped the red-head out of it and she came back to herself. She immediately began to cry and threw herself into Neville's arms. "Thank you, thank you, thank you," she said through her tears, each one accompanied by a kiss to his cheek. "You saved my life." She said before proceeding to thoroughly snog him. He was startled for a moment but decided that he would be silly to pass up such an opportunity.

"I think she's ok now," Hermione said, amusement creeping into her voice. She was still rattled herself at how they were attacked and how lucky they were to be ok.

The final tally of the battle was that 14 students were injured, two seriously who would have a long road to recovery, 2 villagers were killed along with another 6 injured, 3 Aurors were injured and 2 Order members but none seriously. They were able to capture 12 death eaters alive and 2 were seriously injured enough that they died before receiving medical treatment.

The Headmistress awarded points to all those who either fought back or protected younger students. The prefects had a meeting where it was announced that all further Hogsmead visits for the year were suspended. The risk to the students was too high to allow them to leave the security of the wards.

Voldemort was irritated that his duel with Dumbledore had been interrupted and so many of his followers had been captured. He did get perverse satisfaction out of the fact that the Aurors were after his former transfiguration professors as much as they were after him. He did notice the Potter boy send a few curses at both of them while they dueled but was too busy fighting to return fire.

Dumbledore was just as mad at the duel being interrupted and absolutely enraged that the Aurors attempted to arrest him. He was fighting the Dark Lord and they still thought of him as a criminal! He would have to work much harder to convince everyone that he was the Light Lord and should never be questioned. He did everything for the greater good! He couldn't believe that Harry had fired a cutting curse at him. It had sliced through his robe and gave him a shallow cut on his thigh. The boy would have to be dealt with before he got any further out of control.

Harry and his DA group received praise from not only the other students but the parents and press as well. Attendance at DA meeting drastically rose after that and he had to have an extra session for the younger students who were not as advanced as the rest. School unity was at an all time high as the once pro-dark

students realized that the death eaters didn't care who they were attacking. One of the seriously injured students was a Slytherin whose parents were dark supporters, not death eaters but political backers.

The students were still quite shaken up a few days later and Harry suggested to the Headmistress that they should call in a psychologist for the students to talk to. After having to explain what he meant and how it would help she immediately began searching for anyone with those skills who already was familiar with the wizarding world. She was able to find a middle aged squib that had left the wizarding world and became a muggle doctor. Through him she was able to get the name to two other squibs that could potentially help her. One was an actual psychologist and the other worked for child services.

Within a week of the attack both women were at the school talking to students about the attack and helping them move past it. The ministry, seeing a need they had ignored in the past, began a program to encourage more people to become psychologists. They were able to offer scholarships to a muggle university to three squibs who were excited about learning a new profession as well as being able to help people and be able to stay in the wizarding world. Harry was just stunned that he was able to open up a new career path for those with less magic so easily. He wondered just how many other things muggles took for granted that he could introduce into the magical world.

Chapter 11: Quidditch Holidays

The winter holidays were quickly approaching and the students were getting restless. There had not been any more attacks on wizarding targets but Voldemort was ramping up his campaign of terror on muggles, he was using the attacks to draw out Dumbledore and the two of them had fought a handful of times since Hogsmead, always ending with them being interrupted by aurors and having to flee.

The only students not wanting to go home for the holidays were the muggle-borns who were afraid of the increasing violence against muggles from Voldemort. Hermione had been scared for her mum and Harry offered to let her stay at 12 Grimwald until the end of the war. Dr. Granger had left her dental practice with her estranged husband and was donating her time and skills to the less wealthy areas of London. She seemed to like the work and it wasn't too far from Grimwald.

"Lord Black," Draco approached Harry on morning after breakfast.

Recognizing Draco was being formal for a reason Harry paused. "Yes cousin, what can I do for you?"

"There are many Slytherin students afraid of returning home for the holidays. They do not want to be pressed into service to the Dark Lord. They also cannot just say they are staying here without a good reason to do so. I was hoping you and your associates could come up with an alternative." Draco said quietly, knowing there were still some actual Voldemort supporters around.

"I will see what I can do Draco. How many students do you think we are talking about?" Harry asked curiously.

"In the upper years I would say maybe half the Slytherins and some of the Ravenclaws as well. The lower years are all on the light side but shouldn't be pressed into service at such a young age." Draco said. "Thank you for any help you can provide."

Harry had told everyone that he was taking care of making the plans for Christmas. Hermione, Neville, Dudley, Remus and Hermione's

mum were content with letting Harry make the plans but were curious as to what he was up to. Since Draco had asked for his help he had been adjusting his plans to fit. He and Mike from the farm had been writing back and forth for over a month making plans.

Harry approached the blonde after lunch and told him that he had plans made but needed to speak with all the students involved. Draco was to pass the word and have any student who needs sanctuary come to the Room of Requirement tomorrow night after dinner.

Harry and his friends were in the ROR waiting on the students afraid to go home for the holidays. They were surprised by the large turnout. There were five 7th years: the 4 Slytherin girls, 2 Ravenclaws boys and 1 Hufflepuff boy. The 6th year Slytherins with Draco were Blaise Zabini, Theo Nott, Daphne Greengrass, Tracy Davis and Millicent Bullstrode. He was surprised to see quite a few 6th year Ravenclaws: Terry Boot, Anthony Goldstein, Mandy Brockhurst and Lisa Turpin. There were almost all the 3rd, 4th and 5th years from Slytherin present as well as 5th years Su Li and Tad Worthington from Ravenclaw. All told there were almost 45 students afraid of going home for the holidays.

"I have an idea that should make your parents ok with you not going home for the holidays. First, how many of you love Quidditch?" He asked and was glad to see $\frac{3}{4}$ of the room raise their hands. "Good, now of the rest of you, how many of you are good friends with someone who just raised their hand?" He was glad to see everyone else raise their hand. "Anyone not raise their hand?" He asked just to be sure and then grinned at them all.

"Well then this your lucky day then," He told them with a bounce. "You all get to join me for the holidays at my family farm in the states."

"How is that supposed to trick our parents?" Su Li asked not knowing Harry well enough to recognize that he had something huge hidden up his sleeve.

"I will get to that in a moment," Harry said with a grin, "first everyone needs to sign the confidentiality paper that Hermione is handing out

so that we can be sure that no one will run off and tell Old Voldie or any of his supporters.

Once everyone had signed the paper, which Hermione passed around without knowing what the secret plans were herself, Harry dropped the news. "The Potter Family Farm is better known as 'The Farm,' you know the way cool Quidditch training facility." Harry just laughed at the absolutely stunned expressions on everyone's faces.

"You own The Farm?" Terry Boot asked in awe, he had always wanted to go there and had loved every second of the workshop earlier in the year.

"Yep and now we all get to go hang out there for the holidays." Harry told them. "I have cleared it with the staff and they are willing to help any of you interest with Quidditch and there are all kinds of other activities to do. It is a safe location that is only accessible by portkey and I have official invitations to camp for all of you to send to your families. You even get to ask for them to pay for it, which will give you extra spending money, and if they don't you'll be awarded a 'scholarship.' Now what do you think?" Harry was bouncing again with excitement.

"I think you're bloody brilliant," Colm Harper the 5th year reserve keeper for Slytherin told him with a grin.

"Now, we want to keep this quiet from the rest of the school before we leave so that we are not flooded with requests to join us. I think a group of over 50 is large enough don't you?"

"Who else is coming?" Draco asked curiously, looking more at Hermione than anyone as he knew she wasn't big on flying.

"My best friends and family," Harry told them. "Hermione, Neville, Luna, Remus Lupin and his friend Tonks, the 5 remaining Weasleys, Hermione's mum and my cousin Dudley.

"Now since there is such a big group of us most of you will be staying in the bunk houses used for camps. I expect all of you will be on your best behavior and be respectful to the staff. This is their holiday and

many have volunteered to help out even though this is their time off. The Farm Staff will have their family and friends there as well so it will not be empty. I'm offering to let you stay and keep you safe but I promise that anyone who acts up will be sent back here immediately. I am looking forward to my holiday and it should be a lot of fun with all of you there too." Harry warned them.

They all talked for another half hour working out the details. Everyone had taken Harry's threats seriously and none wanted to miss a chance to see The Farm, even if it wasn't for an official camp.

"Are you sure we can trust all of them?" Hermione asked Harry later that night as they sat in front of the fire doing homework. Neville was thinking the same thing and both were waiting on Harry's answer.

"No I'm not," Harry said with a shrug. "But that is why we are going to The Farm rather than my house. The farm is hidden and they won't know where they are to give away their location. We will have the entire staff as well as their families and the Weasley men to keep everyone in line. Besides, I meant every word of my threat and have portkeys ready to send them back to the front gates if they act up."

"But what if one of them tries something against you while you're sleeping?" Hermione asked him realizing there couldn't be any real security on the bunk houses.

"I'm not planning on staying in the bunks," Harry told her with a grin. "All the extras get to stay in the bunks. I've had our holidays planned out for a while; we all get a place in the main house."

"So you were taking us there for Christmas anyway?" Neville asked.

"Yep, I thought it would be fun to be able to all hang out and didn't want to be cooped up inside Grimwald all holiday. I wanted to get some flying in, visit my friends on the staff and thought Hermione would want to visit the sanctuary." Harry said with a smile and they talked the rest of the night on what they wanted to do with their time off.

Albus Dumbledore was making plans for Christmas. He needed to get Harry back under his control and knew the boy would be going home for Christmas. He was planning on following him from the train and grabbing him before he entered the Order's new headquarters. He knew that as soon as he had control of the boy again the wizarding world would fall back in line. The Order would once again be under his control when he found out their headquarters.

He was angry that all his attempts at routing Voldemort's forces were interrupted by the aurors. They were still treating him like a criminal even though he was doing everything in his power to stop the death eaters. He had read in the paper that he was considered Public Enemy #2 just behind Voldemort, but he knew they were just scared. He would show them all. Once Harry killed Voldemort for him, he would take out Harry and once again be the one that saved the day, everyone would love him and follow him again.

Voldemort was angry that every fight he had with Dumbledore was interrupted. He wanted the old man dead! He was glad to see Dumbledore listed as Public Enemy #2 and knew that even if someone else took out the old man that he was finished being the manipulator of the wizarding world. The majority of his remaining Death Eaters were content to follow his orders of not attacking any magical targets. He wanted to see how the new legislation being passed changed the views of the general public. He wished he was the one bringing about the changes but at least the changes were being made and Dumbledore was disgraced.

The Ministry wasn't sure what to do about the two mad men out to kill each other. The aurors had noticed the lack of wizarding targets and how Voldemort and his death eaters seemed only concerned with fighting Dumbledore. Many in the Ministry wondered if there ever would have been a war if Dumbledore hadn't been so much in control.

Everyone except Luna was joining them at the Farm for Christmas as she was going on an expedition with her father. They would all leave in groups from the train station. Hermione would go to the muggle side and bring Dudley and her mum through the barrier to them so they didn't shock any muggles when they used the portkey.

Harry's group was last to go so not to alert any of the other Slytherin parents that they were going to the same place as the others. Remus and the Weasley's were already there and had a list of the invited Slytherins so they could make sure there were no unexpected tag-alongs.

"Hey Dud!" Harry said with a grin when he saw his cousin. "Looking good!" Dudley had lost at least another 10 to 20 lbs since the summer.

"Good to see you Harry!" Dudley said as the two shook hands, they were still not quite comfortable with hugs. "You too Nev." The two boys had kept in touch as well throughout the year and Dudley was grateful for some of the study advice Neville had given him. Nev remembered how hard it was to learn when he was younger and had been helping Dud when Hermione's explanations were too detailed to understand.

The 5 of them grabbed the portkey and were whisked away to the portkey area at the farm. Harry didn't want to advertise his personal portkey so they used one that Mike sent that would take them to where everyone else landed as well. They landed to see the others all standing around waiting on them. There was also quite a few farm staff around wanting to say hello to Harry.

Miko took all their baggage so they could stay and hang out rather than walk up to the house.

Harry introduced everyone to Charlie Weasley and told them that he and the twins would be taking everyone on a tour and showing them where they would be staying in Yellow section. Yellow was the closest section to the dining hall and main house so it made the most sense to put everyone there.

Harry and his friends headed over towards the staff area. He was excited to see the new housing and community center. The houses had been a big hit with the staff and Mike had told him everyone was happy and no one had plans on leaving soon.

"Welcome back Harry," Garret Erb said with a grin as Harry and his friends walked into the new community building. "Hi everyone, I'm

Garret Erb the director here.” Harry introduced his friends to many of the staff who were in the building and was introduced to the families of many of the staff as well.

“Hermione!” A voice called out as they were making their way to the main house to settle in.

She turned around to see Victor Krum hurrying over to her and grinned. “Victor!” she squealed and hurried to hug her friend she hadn’t seen in two years. Harry had to hold in a smirk at the dirty look Dudley sent Victor when Hermione hugged him.

“Where’s Ashley?” Harry asked the pro Quidditch player.

“She’s already in the main house; she and Aimee the new receptionist have gotten to be good friends and are most likely gossiping.” Victor said with a laugh.

“Your English is so much better!” Hermione said happily and then noticed the dark look on Dudley’s face. “Oh sorry Dud, Victor this is my good friend Dudley Dursley, he’s also Harry’s cousin. Dud, this is Victor Krum.” Hermione watched the two guys eye each other up and was confused by the looks they were giving each other. “Come on I want to go see Ashley!” She said and they all continued their trek to the house.

Dudley was shocked at the grandeur of the main house; he hadn’t expected something so lavish at a place called The Farm. “This place is awesome Harry,” he said as he peeked into the lounge with the big screen TV and state of the art electronics.

“It should be with how much money the former director wasted remodeling it,” Harry said with a laugh. “Dud, this is Ashley, one of the flying trainers and Victor’s beautiful girlfriend.” Harry said introducing her as she hurried over to say hello. “She’s the one that is going to see if you have enough latent magic to be able to fly.”

“Nice to meet you,” Dudley said with a grin at the thought that he may be able to fly. He was excited to at least be able to see a match even if he couldn’t fly.

They days leading up to Christmas passed quickly in a rush of pick-up games, horseback riding and just hanging out. Hermione was glad to see that her mother had made friends with Garret's wife and the other woman was making sure that Emily was having a good time as well.

The main house and the community center for the staff were decorated for Christmas and everyone was getting into the festive spirit. Hermione was in love with the sanctuary and was having Ash teach her all about the animals there.

Dudley was able to get a broom to respond to him and was busy learning how to be a beater. He was having the most fun of all of them since it was a new experience for him and something he could participate in even without magic.

The Slytherin/Ravenclaw refuges were having their own Christmas gathering so Harry and his friends were able to have a more intimate gift opening experience in the morning before the entire compound got together for a huge feast later in the day. Harry had once again gone all out and bought way too many gifts for everyone. He bought Neville, Hermione and Dudley all their own brooms. They were the newest Nimbus model the 2005, the same broom given out at the workshop earlier in the year. Remus was also given a broom but it was an exact copy of Harry's Marauder design, he figured that the only surviving Marauder should have one of the brooms as well. Mrs. Granger had been difficult for Harry to buy for since he didn't know her very well but he had found a photo of Hermione, him and Sirius and had it blown up and framed for both Emily and Hermione. He also gave her a gift certificate to Harrods so that she could continue to outfit her new flat in things she liked.

They had just finished up with opening gifts when the Weasley men trooped in with gifts for them as well. Harry grinned and hurried to his room to get the red heads gifts as well. He had bought the 3 Quidditch players each a new Nimbus 2005 as well and a special shrinkable broom for Bill to take with him when curse breaking. He grinned as he tossed Mr. Weasley a set of car keys.

“Your new car is waiting for you at headquarters,” Harry told him with a grin. “I figured you needed a new one to tinker with.” To say Arthur was shocked at Harry’s generosity was an understatement.

The feast that night was wonderful, the house elves had outdone themselves and put Hogwarts feasts to shame. The community dining room was packed full of staff, their families, friends and Harry and everyone who came with him as well as all the other students. They were enjoying the party atmosphere and all the holiday crackers.

Garret was dressed up like Santa and was going around handing out presents to everyone there. Harry was having a blast and was very glad he had decided to spend Christmas away from the castle. He knew that sooner or later he would have to get directly involved in the war between Voldie and Dumbles but was glad that for at least a while more he was able to just relax and have a great time with friends.

Chapter 12:

There was much talk when the group got back from their holidays about the Farm and what a great time they had. Harry had decided that it didn't need to be a secret that the others went there for 'camp' but that they were not to mention that he and his friends were there or that he owned it. The first couple weeks back all most of the Quidditch fans could talk about was trying to enroll in one of the summer camps at the Farm. Everyone had loved the workshop earlier in the year and then hearing the Slytherins and Ravenclaws talk about how much fun they had... well Harry was sure there would be quite a few Hogwarts sign-ups for the summer camps.

Hermione had started revising for end of year exams as soon as they returned and was pestering everyone in Gryffindor to do the same. She reminded Harry and Neville that things always seemed to happen towards the end of the year to interrupt their study time and that they should start early just in case the war got worse before the end of the year.

Harry was beginning to get anxious for the 'war' to be over. There had been no more attacks on wizarding areas since the Hogsmead attack. Voldemort and Dumbledore had fought three more times and been interrupted each time by the arrival of the Aurors. Harry just wanted to take down Voldemort and get that part of his life over with. He had decided he didn't want to be an Auror. He knew he had natural talent in DADA but he decided he would prefer dueling tournaments compared to chasing dark wizards. He had been studying for his end of year exams, mostly to appease Hermione, and had decided to take his NEWT tests in both language courses as well as in Warding at the end of the school year. He could sit them at Hogwarts with the 7th years. He and Dudley had been writing back and forth more often as Harry attempted to tutor his cousin in his magical education. Overall Harry had a very bad case of 'summer-itis' and was ready for the year to be over and to spend time with his friends at home.

With Dumbledore and Snape gone the school was much more relaxed and Harry had taken to roaming the school when he was escaping Hermione's insane study schedule. Even though it was still

quite cold in late January Harry decided he wanted to search around the Chamber of Secrets. After a thorough use of cleaning spells and vanishing spells to get rid of the grime, rodent bones and the stench of rotting basilisk Harry was able to get a good look at the chamber for the first time. In his second year he didn't really have much time to take in his surroundings as he was busy fighting off the giant snake. The only other time he had come down was to render the remains of the basilisk, and had left again as soon as he was finished.

Harry wandered the giant chamber wondering at its size and that there seemed to be no point to the room other than to house a giant bust of Salazar Slytherin and possibly house a 1,000 year old serpent. Muttering to himself about the pointlessness of the chamber and how Slytherin must have been a bigger megalomaniac than Voldemort to waste such space; he never noticed that he slipped into speaking Parseltongue. With all the snake décor in the chamber he had unknowingly started ranting in snake speak and the chamber began to respond. "I mean he could have put something useful in here like a study or a library or even a dueling chamber!" Harry ranted, not noticing that doors were appearing with every area he mentioned.

Finally, after running out of derogatory things to say about the chamber, its founder and any of Slytherin's descendents Harry paused and looked around again, finally noticing the new additions. Walking up to the closest revealed door he noticed squiggly writing on it that quickly formed into the word "Library." Harry stood in shock as he realized he was looking at a written version of Parseltongue, something he had no idea even existed. He tentatively opened the door, his eyes shut tight in case there were more basilisks. He plucked up his courage and hissed in Parseltongue for any live snake to speak, after not hearing anything he breathed a sigh of relief and slowly opened his eyes. The room was dust coated and dingy but he could clearly see that it was a richly appointed library full of shelves of priceless volumes, none having been touched in centuries.

"Dobby," Harry called out knowing he was going to need help cleaning the place without damaging the ancient texts. Dobby's eyes widened as he realized where it was his master and friend had called him to. Harry smiled at his small friend, "Yes, this is Slytherin's Chamber." He informed the elf. "It seems there is much more here

that anyone realized. I want to get this place cleaned up but I am afraid I will hurt the books and other ancient artifacts, can you help?"

"Dobby can, but this bein's big job, wees should be asking for Hogwarts elves to helps too." Dobby told him trying to resist the urge to punish himself for not being able to immediately do as Harry asked, he was getting better at it but still had the urges after years of being forced to punish himself with the Malfoys.

"OK Dobby, go recruit as many castle elves as will be willing to help out down here and I'll start opening the other doors and seeing what all we have found down here." Harry said and made his way over to the next door to find and elaborate study. He figured once the room was clean it would look even more impressive than Dumbledore's old office. He also discovered a dueling chamber, potions lab, bedroom with ensuite, two smaller storage rooms and what looked like it used to be an indoor greenhouse. There was also another room that looked like a lab that was used to breed snakes, he was sure that was where the basilisk was hatched. There were a few undisturbed, unhatched eggs in various places as well as quite a few snake skeletons in different glass tanks, the entire room creeped him out and he was glad when Dobby popped back in with half a dozen castle elves.

"Ok, this room is disturbing; please get rid of all the dead snakes and determine if those eggs are still viable. If not please dispose of them as well. I would like all the newly discovered rooms cleaned and aired out but without destroying the centuries old treasures. Any questions?" Harry asked the mini army of elves.

"Theres more hiddens rooms," An older looking elf said pointing at different areas that appeared to be bare stone and to areas within the newly revealed rooms. "Wes cannot opens them without snake speaking."

Harry followed the elf around and spoke in Parseltongue to open all the hidden rooms, disgusted to find a dungeon/prison cells as well as two additional entrances leading up into the castle. There was also a small kitchen with attached elf quarters, a dining room and two more bedrooms. Overall it now appeared to be a large manor house hidden

below ground and the 'Chamber of Secrets' was just the large entry hall. Looking at the layers of dust Harry was able to determine that Tom Riddle had never found the other areas of the chamber when he was a student. He wondered why the boy didn't try to explore further but decided he wasn't going to look a gift horse in the mouth, they were all very lucky that young Voldie didn't find all the treasures the chamber held and only found the nasty old snake.

The library was where Harry headed as soon as the elves had cleaned and fumigated it. They had told him that everything had preservation charms on it and all they had needed to do was clean off the years of dust and grime. The books were in pristine condition; even though Harry couldn't imagine they had such great preservation charms so long ago. Once he double checked that everything was safe he headed back into the castle, following one of the newly found passages just to see where it led. The passage came out directly across from the library and he smiled and went in knowing he would find his sister in there. After rounding up Hermione, Neville and Luna he took them down to the Chamber to show them what he found.

The next few weeks, when they were not in classes, were spent exploring all the treasures left in the Chamber of Secrets. Hermione and Luna had parked themselves in the library and were going through every book and scroll they could find in hopes of discovering a way for Harry to defeat either Voldie or Dumbles or hopefully both. Harry and Neville joined in as much as they could, although neither could spend hour after hour reading like the girls. They took breaks and explored the other newly discovered treasures. Neville had moaned with delight when he discovered drawers of preserved seeds and plant samples in the 'Greenhouse' room. The dead plants had all been cleared away but the equipment and the preserved seedlings were just fine. There were many samples of extinct plant material and Neville was giddy with excitement about bringing them back to life again.

Harry liked the 'Study' the best of the discovered rooms and had found hand written journals of Salazar Slytherin himself in the desk. They had been preserved and written in Parseltongue and Harry had been fascinated to read the writings of who many thought of as the founder of the dark arts. It turns out that everyone had been wrong;

the dark arts were around long before Hogwarts, they had even been taught in the founders' time. The dark arts started out as magic powered by emotion and there were many spells that were dark arts that were not 'dark' as they would think of now. They had their own branch of healing spells that used what Slytherin termed 'dark' magic which just meant the magic was based upon intent and emotion rather than words and wand movements.

Harry was fascinated with the way 'dark' magic had been twisted and polluted over the years. Sure Slytherin had been a 'dark' wizard of his time, but then so had Helga Hufflepuff, she was a master of dark magic especially Earth magic and healing. When the school was founded there was no prejudice against dark or light magic, they both just were and some were more attuned to one than the other.

He also found out how the rumors that Slytherin hated all muggles and wanted to kill off muggleborns was started. A muggleborn witch was struggling in her classes and was being teased by other students, not for being muggleborn but for being 'stupid' and she ran away back to her family and told them all about the 'evil magic users' at the castle. The family formed a muggle lynch mob but was unable to find the castle due to the muggle repelling charms; unfortunately Salazar's wife was on her way back from a visit to London and was attacked by the mob and burned at the stake. Slytherin did go after those muggles who had murdered his wife, but then returned to the school to take care of his young son. Salazar decided from then on that the muggleborn were a security risk and should be schooled separately for the first few years until they decided if they could handle being part of the magical world. The other founders disagreed and muggleborns were allowed to remain at Hogwarts but Slytherin would never allow another one in his house again, as the witch that had caused his wife's death had been from his own house.

Harry wasn't sure how the rest of the rumors started but he was sure that things had been blown out of proportion over the years and somehow Slytherin went from not trusting muggleborns to hating them all and from revenge on a few muggles to wanting to kill them all. He wondered what old Voldie would say if he knew the truth of his beloved founder. He wondered if anyone in the wizarding world would believe him, even with the proof from the journal. He hoped after the

war was over he could copy the journal into English rather than Parseltongue and allow it to be published so that everyone could learn the truth.

The four friends' studies in the chamber's library yielded good results. Neville had found quite a few of Slytherin's personal potions texts and ones he co-authored with Helga Hufflepuff on Herbology. It seems that the subjects of Potions, Herbology and Creatures were all considered a branch of 'dark' magic and those whose magic was more compatible with the 'dark' side of magic were much more adept at those subjects. Neville studied the texts that explained the differences between 'dark' and 'light' magic and realized that he was definitely more adept at the 'dark' magics. His skill in potion making instantly increased, even more so than when Snape left. By studying the texts in the chamber library he was able to quickly grasp some of the theories that had left him stumped for years and his natural talent for plants easily extended over into potions. He found that he was fluent in what the founders termed 'Earth Magic' which is why he was so good with plants. There were over a dozen different texts on Earth Magic and many had more than plants and potions, there were spells and rituals as well. Neville had tried a few of the spells and they came more easily to him than any spell he had ever cast using 'light' magic.

Hermione was fascinated with the idea that there were different types of magic, not just the intent of spells. She couldn't understand how the knowledge of 'dark' magic that the founders practiced became so tainted. Nothing about 'dark' magic relates to the Dark Arts. The Dark Arts that Voldemort and his followers used were mostly 'light' magic that had been twisted for an evil purpose. The unforgivable curses were a mix of both kinds of magic which is why it was so difficult to cast them. They required the emotions and intent of dark magic along with the words and motions of light magic. The three unforgivable curses had been created by accident by a healer a decade before Hogwarts was first opened. The healer was experimenting with twisting dark and light magic into powerful healing spells that non-healers could use. The unfortunate results were the unforgivables, the healer went mad with the twisting of his magic and both Slytherin and Gryffindor were involved in hunting down the mad and now evil wizard.

Casting an unforgivable twisted a person's magic to the point that it started to warp a wizard's mind. The lines between good and evil became blurred and after prolonged use of the spells the individual's magic would become unstable and they would go insane. It certainly explained why Voldemort and Bella were nuts. It also explained why the longer a person was a death eater the more crazy they appeared, it was because they were using the magic more often and losing themselves to it. The other so called Dark Arts would not corrupt the person's magic but were definitely evil in of themselves. Spells like the flame cutter, that Dolohov had tried to cast at Hermione in the DOM, that result in burning someone from the inside out were never intended for good purposes. The reducto curse, which can be quite deadly if cast at someone's head, was created for mining and digging and could easily cut through a wall or door.

True dark magic from the founders' time rarely required any incantations at all and no real wand movements. The intent of the caster was all that was needed and the wand was usually just used to direct the magic. For example, the plant watering spell that Neville learned just required him to focus on the intent of the spell and point his wand at which plant he wanted watered.

Luna was also much more in tune with dark magic, it was how she was able to see all the hidden creatures of the world. She was good at what the founders called 'Beast Magic.' After studying some more texts she was able to quickly learn even more languages and be able to understand creatures that didn't even have language. She realized a lot of the voices in her head that she was always hearing were actually telepathic creatures talking to her. It was why she always had the spaced-out look on her face. Harry was able to work with her on Occlumency and she was able to close off the other voices unless she wanted to hear them. She was able to focus much better after that and lost a lot of her dreamy qualities.

They also found out that Luna was a natural healer. Hermione had been trying to reach a book on a shelf too high above her and lost her balance, falling and hitting her head on another shelf, cutting her head. Luna was the first to get to her and had placed her hand on Hermione's bleeding head, frantically thinking of a way to heal her friend, when her hand began to softly glow blue and the cut began to

heal. She passed out soon after the cut was healed, having spent too much magic. The two girls spent the next day searching through every healing text until they found one of Helga Hufflepuffs books explaining that strong 'dark' magic users would sometimes have natural healing talents that would manifest when they were needed. Luna was able to read how to control the talent so it didn't overwhelm her again and then began absorbing healing texts by the dozen. She even spent time with Madame Pomfrey learning practical healing two afternoons a week between classes and dinner.

Harry found that he had absolutely no talent for 'dark' magic casting and his only leaning in that direction were his language and morphing abilities. He used magic in a pure 'light' way. He was glad for his two friends that seemed to take to dark magic like ducks in water but had been hoping to find something in the dark texts to help him with Riddle and Dumbledore. Hermione's magic was almost entirely light magic. There were different branches of light magic as well and she was quite talented with "Air Magic," it was where her spiritual magics stemmed from as well as much more finite control over any spells involving air such as summoning and levitating. Harry had quite a talent for air magic as well and they wondered if it was a Black trait.

Although Salazar was more tuned to dark magic he had quite a large selection of light magical tomes as well. Harry and Hermione focused their studies on those books while Neville and Luna were making their way through the dark magic ones.

"Do you think it strange that there were 4 founders, two men and two women, and one of each was dark magic users and one of each was light magic users? It seems like such a perfect balance," Hermione commented thoughtfully one night they were studying in the chamber.

"Balance is essential," Luna commented. "I think it is why we are split the same way as they were. We are the perfect balance of magical qualities; it is why we get along so well. Perhaps we were destined to be friends so that we could help Harry with his task."

The four friends were quiet for a moment pondering that thought before Neville started laughing. "That would make me the equivalent

of Slytherin!" They all chuckled at the thought of Neville in Slytherin house.

"Well Harry has always been a true Gryffindor," Hermione said with a smirk. "He is descended from all the founders but his Gryffindor qualities shine the brightest."

"I've always said you were the smartest witch of the age," Harry joined in. "So you shouldn't be surprised you're taking the Ravenclaw spot."

"I never imagined myself as a Hufflepuff before," Luna commented. "But the Helga Hufflepuff that Slytherin writes about is much different from how she is portrayed now."

"I propose a toast," Harry said holding up one of the Butterbeers they had Dobby bring in for them. "To the four of us, may the founders we embody give us the wisdom and strength to take down the evil men that plague us and help us re-educate the world on the true story and magic of Hogwarts." The four tapped their bottles together with renewed determination to see the war come to an end and their world changed for the better.

Chapter 13: Founders' Knowledge

The time leading up to the end of the year seemed to fly by for the four friends. Hermione had found a spell in one of Ravenclaw's books that would copy an entire book, bypassing any copyright charms. It required similar base materials to begin with and was a combination of a charm and transfiguration. She also found the spell that was used to preserve all the books in the chamber. So after each of them had learned to correctly cast each spell and a bulk order of parchment and book binding materials arrived, the four friends spent an hour each night making copies of every book in the library. Harry had rationalized that they couldn't keep the discovery of the Chamber a secret much longer and once they revealed what they had found he knew that every scholar in the Wizarding world would be demanding access to the priceless tomes. They knew that even though they had found them, the adults would want to limit access and they would no longer be able to spend time in the Chamber.

Harry's personal library in his trunk was completely full with the addition of Slytherin's books. He had even removed some of his not as valuable books and placed them in the storage area. He would have to take the trunk back to Mr. Loch and see if he could expand the library for him once school was out. They had made an entire other set of copies of the books that they had Dobby put in the Black Library as well as the other three made copies of the books they thought they would use the most to keep for themselves. The only book that was removed from the Slytherin library was the book that Hermione had found the coping charm in as they determined it would not be fair to book manufactures if everyone could just copy whatever they wanted, so the book was safely removed to the Black Library.

The four friends were way ahead of schedule for studying for exams, even Luna who would be taking her OWL exams. Their spellwork had greatly improved as well due to their newly acquired knowledge of how magic works. Neville had made the most improvement and in the two and half months since they had found the library he had leapfrogged into one of the top 10 students in the year, Harry and Hermione holding the top 2 spots. The professors were impressed with the improvements the friends were having and they were getting asked harder and harder questions as time wore on.

Harry's patience for the questions finally ran out and he snapped at Remus one day after DADA. "If you want to know so bloody badly how we are improving then come with us after dinner and we'll show you where we have been studying!"

"Can the Headmistress accompany us as well?" Remus asked knowing that McGonagall had been the most curious about their improvement.

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"Bring the whole bloody staff for all I care but just stop badgering us!" Harry grumped as he stomped moodily from the room. He was in a bad mood as the number of Voldie/Dumbles fights was increasing, Hermione was becoming more obsessed with exams and he hadn't had time to go flying in days. Flying was the only thing that seemed to calm him and he had been revising for exams or doing homework way more than in past years. Luckily they had Quidditch practice the next night, so his bad mood would lessen some then.

"So where is it exactly that the four of you have been disappearing to every night to study?" Remus asked them after dinner as they were waiting for McGonagall and any of the other professors who wanted to join them to show.

"You'll just have to wait and see," Hermione said with a smirk, which was such a strange look for her that Bill, Tonks and Remus were all a bit worried about where they were going now.

They were joined by Professors McGonagall, Flitwick, Sprout and Madame Pomfrey along with Bill, Tonks and Remus. The four students and seven professors headed out of the great hall and towards Myrtle's bathroom. Remus was the only one to instantly understand the significance of the bathroom while the rest of the professors were confused until Harry opened the entrance slide to the Chamber. He knew it would have been easier for them to take the entrance near the Library but he wanted to keep the other two entrances between himself and his friends for now incase the adults tried to keep them out.

"Is this what I think it is?" Bill asked looking like a kid in a candy shop; it seems he still had quite a bit of his curse breaker spirit left.

"The Chamber of Secrets," Harry said with a big, slightly disturbing grin. "All you have to do is jump in the hole."

"You want us to jump into a hole in the floor that you claim will take us to Slytherin's secret chamber?" Professor Sprout asked him in a tone that clearly indicated she believed the idea to be ludicrous.

"It's perfectly safe professor," Neville tried to reassure her. "We placed a cushioning charm at the bottom and have cleaned up all the mess from the Basilisk." He said it in such an offhand manner that it took the others a few moments to realize what he said.

"It really was a basilisk then?" Flitwick squeaked in shock.

"Of course," Hermione said confused, "What else could it have been? Harry and Ginny both saw it before he killed it."

"But... But... But..." Flitwick stuttered. "Albus said that the enchanted diary that Ginny was writing in gave her that power, he said there was never a secret chamber and that you and Ron were just making up the story about the basilisk to make your defeat of the diary seem that much more exciting." The other teachers nodded.

"Well I knew it was a real basilisk in there," Bill said with a grin. "Didn't you ever wonder where Harry got the basilisk hide for his wand holster from?"

"So there was a real basilisk let loose in my school?" McGonagall queried with pursed lips, "And it was left there for a thousand years by Salazar Slytherin? And if we jump down this hole here we will find the Chamber of Secrets?"

"Yes," Luna added, "Although we cannot be sure it was Slytherin himself that left the basilisk in the there, it could have been his son or even a grandchild. All information that I have found on basilisk seems to indicate that they live to be between 700 and 1,000 years old so

the one Harry killed would have been almost to the end of its life and should not have been agile enough to maneuver through the pipes to petrify students.”

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This was the most that any of the teachers had heard her speak and without any of her previous spaciness. They were surprised as she had still been zoning out in classes when bored to listen to the telepathic creatures so the professors had not seen her new demeanor much.

“Ok, so who’s coming with?” Harry asked as he motioned for Neville and Luna to jump down first. Bill just grinned and followed with a ‘whoopie’ as he slid down the hole. Tonks and Remus were next as they trusted that Harry wouldn’t let anything bad happen to Neville and Luna so they would be safe too.

“I have to be the last through so I can close the entrance,” Harry told the other professors making it clear to them that they were going to have to decide.

“Alright Mr. Potter, but if I have to patch up anyone when we get down there...” Madame Pomfrey said trailing off in what was easily a threat before hopping in the hole herself. Flitwick just shrugged before jumping down after her.

“Well as Headmistress I suppose I should say I have been everywhere in the Castle,” McGonagall said before following the others with more dignity than Harry knew was possible while jumping into a hole in the ground. Sprout was obviously the most scared and Hermione sent her a reassuring smile before following the Headmistress down.

“Professor Sprout I promise it is safe and that you will want to see what is down there. There is nothing dangerous left and I have had the house elves clean it all up.” Harry told her with a grin realizing that his professor may just be slightly claustrophobic, “The slide is quite wide at the bottom and the room we are going into is easily as large

as the great hall.” He must have guessed right as the Herbology professor seemed to relax and jumped into the hole.

Harry grinned as he bounced out of the slide and saw that everyone was already heading towards the entrance. He opened that door as well and led them all into the Chamber.

“It’s huge!” Tonks exclaimed looking around at the giant room and all the snake décor. “How did he construct this without anyone else knowing?” The seven staff members spent some time wandering around the main chamber before Bill noticed that the students were all leaning against one of the bare walls looking amused.

“I’m guessing this isn’t what you wanted to show us then?” He asked.

“It’s part of it of course but Remus wanted to know how we are all doing so much better in classes and there is a very good reason.” Harry said and then hissed the revealing spell that would show every hidden door in the chamber.

The professors didn’t know what to think as a dozen different doors appeared where solid wall was seconds earlier. The idea that the Chamber was more than just a giant shrine to Slytherin was a lot to take in.

“Tom Riddle never discovered the actual secrets of the Chamber of Secrets when he was a student here.” Harry told them, “But luckily for us, I have.” He then opened the door to the library and the four friends went in first so they could see the looks on the professors’ faces when they realized what a huge treasure they had just found.

Bill was the first through the door and Remus had to physically push him out of the way so the rest could enter as Bill’s eyes had gone wide and he had frozen in wonder in the doorway. The rest of the faculty had similar reactions once they realized just where they were.

“Thousand year old texts....” McGonagall said reverently.

“How are they still preserved? Those charms were only discovered 500 years ago?” Flitwick asked, still in awe.

“There is a lot of forgotten knowledge in this room,” Hermione told them. Harry just went to the bookcases and pulled off a book for each of the professors, picking something he -

knew each would find to be priceless treasures. He handed McGonagall one of the books by Godric Gryffindor on transfiguration and had to steady her and lead her to a chair once she read the title and author. This repeated itself when Neville handed Professor Sprout one of Helga Hufflepuff’s Earth magic books. Luna had given one Helga’s healing texts to Madame Pomfrey and Hermione had fetched one of Rowena Ravenclaw’s charms texts for Professor Flitwick.

“As amusing as it is that you seem to have broken our colleagues,” Remus said. “Would you care to clue us in on what has them in such a state?”

Harry just smirked at his friend for a moment. “Just go look at a few of the titles on the shelves and I am sure you will be broken soon as well. I know you love books so I’m sure there is something of interest in here for you.”

Remus just shrugged and he and Tonks headed towards the left wall, which was conveniently enough the section on defensive magic. Bill just smiled and asked Hermione to show him her favorite book, knowing that whatever the bookworm deemed her favorite would be something worth reading.

It took a few more minutes before the professors regained the powers of speech. Professor Sprout gently set the priceless book on one of the tables and then proceeded to hug first Harry and then Neville and the girls babbling the whole time about it being a dream come true and that they had proven her theory. It turns out the Sprout was also adept at Earth magic and had been trying to convince Dumbledore and the ministry for years that there was something different about the magic she was able to do with plants than the regular magic taught, they had always just written her off as too obsessed with her subject.

It took Harry and his friends the rest of the evening, until it was almost curfew, to explain all that they had found to the professors. The professors were reluctant to leave but realized that without Harry they would be trapped down there. Harry promised to try and find a way for the professors to access the chamber without him as long as they promised not to keep him out. He would wait a few days and then show Remus and Professor McGonagall the secret passage leading near the library. He would even set a non-Parseltongue password for them to use, though he would still be able to override it with the Parseltongue one.

The buzz over the next few weeks was about the newly discovered library of ancient books. That many were written by the four founders themselves made the discovery that much more gossip worthy. There were whispers that everything from Slytherin should be burned immediately so as not to corrupt any more minds. The Ravenclaw students were becoming increasingly more vocal in wanting to get their hands on some of the books, they could care less who had authored the books and just wanted to learn. The Gryffindors were showing their intolerance by being the perpetrators of the 'burn everything Slytherin' comments, even though Harry had taken to insulting the intelligence of anyone he heard making such stupid remarks.

"I think we will need to make a few of the books available to everyone," Remus commented in a mini staff meeting with those who were in the know along with the four friends. "We should definitely try and get some of the books that Slytherin wrote out for circulation, it may change a lot of people's preconceived conceptions."

"The problem with that is that there is no easy way to copy the books for distribution," Madame Pince said, she had been brought in as the resident book expert. Her face when she saw the Chamber library still brought chuckles to the four friends. Harry thought that she was going to kiss him and none of the others, professors included, could remember seeing the normally stern and unforgiving witch look so happy. "The books were preserved so perfectly that the -

copyright charms are still in full effect, even if there is no publisher or author around to print new copies. The charms are nothing like I have

seen and I would be afraid of damaging the books if we tried to dispel the charms.”

“That leaves us with having to either hand copy or dictate to a Dicta-Quill.” Flitwick said sadly, thinking of all the lost time and effort that would take.

Luckily the friends had thought of this and had prepared. Hermione pulled one of her specially charmed contracts out of her bag, the same type used for the DA. “I may have a solution, but we will need to make sure that it doesn’t leave this room.” The professors looked at her with a mixture of respect and exasperation.

“Can you give us a hint so that we know if it is worth signing one of your booby trapped parchments?” Bill asked with amusement in his voice. He had enjoyed working with her on the modified Order parchment and knew that whatever she wanted to tell or show them would be good judging from the charms radiating from the parchment in front of her. Hermione just smirked and tossed a book to Madam Pince, it just so happened to be one of the copies of Godric Gryffindor’s Human Transfiguration book.

“Impossible,” the librarian said softly as she handed the book, which was obviously a new copy from the age of the binding and parchment, to the other professors. Hermione just smiled again at her and pushed the parchment closer to her. It took Pince less than a second to snatch up a quill and sign her name, earning a chuckle from Bill who was the next to sign. The other professors also signed their names as they were all curious how she was able to get around the copyright charms.

“There is a book in the Black library that has a charm that bypasses the protective and copyright charms on any book. It is a combination of charms and transfiguration.” Harry told them, which was not entirely a lie as the book currently was in the Black library. “You need parchment and bindings to transfigure and then the charm bypasses the protection and copies the book.”

“Will you teach us?” Bill asked, hoping that was why they signed the parchment.

“Yes, but you will have to promise not to use this for personal gain or abuse the privilege. Also, we have to decide together which books to copy and how many and if we want to further transfigure the books to look dated so as not to have the originals ever leave the Chamber. We don’t want to damage the originals and risk losing the information forever.” Hermione responded.

The group took another hour to decide on a plan and Madame Pince was taught the spells needed. She would be the one to spend time making the copies as she had the lightest schedule out of any of them and she could work on it while doing her normal job as well. They had decided on 14 books to make available to the general public in a wide range of subjects, all of which would apply to the Hogwarts curriculum. They would make four copies of each for the library at Hogwarts and then two copies for the Ministry of Magic, one for the main library and one for the unspeakables. They would then make 6 copies for the various magical libraries around England and Scotland. The 14 books were:

Human Transfiguration by Godric Gryffindor

History of Parseltongue by Loki Slytherin (Salazar’s father)

Earth Magic Fundamentals by Helga Hufflepuff

Healing Magic: Beginner Level by Helga Hufflepuff

Rune Magic Fundamentals by Helga Hufflepuff

Herbology for Potions by Helga Hufflepuff & Salazar Slytherin

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Index of Magical Lifeforms by Salazar Slytherin

Beginners’ Potions Manual by Salazar Slytherin

Warding & Protective Magic by Salazar Slytherin & Godric Gryffindor

Modern Magical Theory by Rowena Ravenclaw

Charms for Everyday Use by Rowena Ravenclaw

Arithmacy Theories by Rowena Ravenclaw

Crafting & Enchanting by Rowena Ravenclaw & Godric Gryffindor

Defensive Magic by R. Ravenclaw, H. Hufflepuff, G. Gryffindor & S. Slytherin

The copying of the first set of books went off without a hitch and the library quickly became a new hotspot and the books were not allowed to be checked out. It became typical to see four or five students crowded around one book, all trying to read at the same time.

There were many who were not pleased at the discovery. The Daily Prophet reporter had given the discovery very good coverage and had even quoted a few passages from the books. The overall public was very much in favor of the new discovery but the Ministry was not. Fudge tried to pass a bill in the Wizengamot that banned all the books and then when that failed he went on the WWW and announced that the books were frauds and could not be authenticated, even though the authentication papers had been printed in an earlier issue. Fudge was joined in his displeasure by both Voldemort and Dumbledore who were protesting the publications as fake since neither one wanted the public to become any more knowledgeable. Dumbles didn't want anyone to realize that Slytherin was not an insane dark lord and was insulted at the thought that dark magic was not evil would totally thwart his plans.

Voldemort didn't want anyone to realize that Slytherin had nothing against most muggles as he needed to keep his support base and he really did hate muggles due to his upbringing. In fact Voldemort had even sent a request to Hogwarts for copies of the book under the name of a fake school in hopes of learning more. He really wanted to get his hands on the book History of Parseltongue and was angry that he had not found the hidden library during his time at Hogwarts. The location of the library had not been released to the public just that it had been found in a hidden chamber inside the school.

"Harry can you believe it? Exams are over and there has been no attempt on your life this year!" Hermione was overly excited as she always was after a test. They had already gone over all their answers together and all three of the 6th year friends were sure they had done excellent on their exams. Luna was taking her last OWL and would join them at dinner.

"Don't jinx it Hermione," Neville warned with a grin. "There is still a week before the end of school."

"No kidding," Harry said ruefully, "Anything can happen in a week. But you're right, at least this year it didn't interrupt my schoolwork."

"I can't wait for the Symposium next weekend!" Hermione gushed. "Can you believe all the experts that are coming here to look at the library? I am so excited; we'll get to meet some of the most intelligent witches and wizards in the world!"

"What I can't believe is that they want me to give a talk on Slytherin. I understand that I am the only one other than Voldi that can read Parseltongue but I didn't expect that so many experts would want to hear about it." Harry told her, still bewildered that he was going to have to present in front of people so much smarter and more experienced than he was. The leading language experts in the world would be there along with many others to hear about the language, -

see it in written form and learn about the inherent magic it contains. He had started preparing for his presentation but had a lot more work to do to get ready. Now that exams were over the professors had excused the four friends from class work to allow them to help get ready for the Symposium.

Luna would be giving a workshop on exotic creatures and their languages, Neville was helping Professor Sprout with the Earth Magic and Herbology workshops, and Hermione was assisting all the rest with research in the library. Madame Pince was busy as well making copies of the materials the professors would be presenting so that nothing would have to leave the safety of the Chamber. She was also doing as the friends had done and was making one copy of every

single book and scroll for the new special library that would be off of the Headmistress' office. The area had already been cleared and filled with bookshelves. The professors had been hard at work recreating Slytherin's library, without the snake décor, and aging all the copies so that they could show off their 'find' to the general public. They had to make it look realistic and the house elves had helped by converting storage areas near the Headmaster's office into the library space. The storage space had been for elves only as the only way in or out was through popping. It had been where they stored all the extra classroom furniture and such but they were more than willing to move that to another similar location so that the story of the 'newly discovered' space would be believable.

There would be 14 different workshops over two days. They would begin Friday morning with Madame Pince describing the made-up discovery and presenting a list of the books to the scholars. Harry would have the first actual workshop for his presentation on both Parseltongue and Salazar Slytherin. They had tried to talk him into splitting his presentations apart and going on separate days like Luna and Neville were planning on doing but he just wanted to go first and get it done with. Harry was probably the only one not looking forward to the Symposium as he was the only one speaking on topics he didn't feel comfortable enough with. Parsel Magic was an entirely new concept to him and even though he was only one of two known Parseltongue speakers in the world at the moment, the thought of someone casting magic at him in Parseltongue creeped him out.

Hermione was been roped into presenting on the history of the other founders they had learned while reading in the Chamber as well as presenting an overall idea of their theories and philosophies. Harry had never seen her so strung out before, not even before OWLs. She had read about so many of the invited quests that she was terrified of sounding like an ignorant first year in front of them. So she did what she does best and studied, studied, made lists, studied and then revised her presentation over and over. The general student body could care less about the Symposium and only a few of the older year students, mostly Ravenclaws, were even planning on attending. They assumed that the books in the library were the majority of the find and they would learn about them in class. This worked out well for the faculty as they didn't have to expand the Great Hall to be able to fit

the guests for the workshops. The students were told to avoid the Great Hall for meals as they were being served in the common rooms and a few empty classrooms had been converted into dining/study halls for anyone wanting to use them over the weekend.

Chapter 14: Destiny Fulfilled

Harry and friends joined the other presenters for an early morning breakfast meeting before the Symposium began to make sure all the bugs were worked out. The invited guests would begin arriving by portkey within the hour. The cover story for the discovery of the library was that Harry and friends had volunteered to help McGonagall reorganize her study off of her office as it had not been touched since Dumbledore left, which was true. Harry was helping move a side table when he noticed a small snake carved in the wall, causing him to lose focus and drop the table on his foot, at which time he yelled and since he had been looking at the snake carving it came out in Parseltongue and that triggered the password that kept the library concealed. Overall it was a believable enough story, or at least all those involved hoped so. It's not like there would have been many people speaking Parseltongue to a wall in the Headmaster's study. They even went the extra distance and created the passageway and carved the small snake into the stone of the wall. The professors had said the location was perfect as Dumbledore and the three headmasters before him had all had that wall full of large bookshelves which would have kept the snake carving hidden had it been there.

"Are you nervous?" Hermione asked him as they waited for everyone to arrive. She had stopped fidgeting only when Harry made her start practicing her Occlumency so she would stop projecting both her nerves and her excitement.

"Scared out of my mind," Harry answered calmly as he was in full Occlumency mode so he wouldn't freak out. He also had a bad feeling about the day that was niggling at the back of his mind. He had told the others about it and they promised to be alert. The professors were at the front gates meeting the portkeys as Madame Pince was putting the finishing touches on the materials she would be presenting.

"I can't believe that so many important people want to hear what we have to say," Hermione told him, still trying to wrap her head around the fact that she was presenting at the Symposium rather than just listening.

“Well I’ve never been normal so why should I start now right?” Harry joked right before people started coming into the hall.

“It is my hope to be able to translate all of Slytherin’s Parseltongue manuscripts into English in the next few years. As I explained earlier it is a difficult job as I keep slipping into the Parsel Magic and have to start over. I will begin with Salazar’s personal journals so that everyone can read about his real ideals and philosophies and not the warped rubbish that is widely believed today. Salazar Slytherin was an accomplished and vastly intelligent wizard and should be applauded for his work not feared for what his descendents have done. It is my hope that this will be the beginning of that change of mindset and that all of you will help me show the masses the truth.” Harry stated, almost to the end of his presentation. “I have researched my family line and found that I am the true Heir of Slytherin as I am descended from Morfin Gaunt while Tom Riddle, who claims the name of Voldemort, is actually descended from Morfin’s younger sister Merope Gaunt. So while Tom Riddle is a descendent of Slytherin he is not and has never been the true heir.”

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“You go too far Potter,” a menacing voice hissed from the back of the room. “I am the Heir of Slytherin and you will not defile the name of Lord Voldemort ever again!” The bad man threw a killing curse at where Harry had been only moments before. Harry had realized as soon as he heard the voice who the man really was, though the glamour charm was quite impressive as it even gave the snake faced mad man a nose and hair.

The room erupted into screams as they realized that Voldemort had made his way inside the castle. There was a mass rush towards the doors as these were scholars, not fighters. Tonks and Remus were attempting to fight their way through the panicking crowd to Harry’s side. Hermione, Luna and Neville had all drawn their wands and were making their way carefully towards Harry, not wanting to get caught in the wash of spells that the dueling pair was tossing back and forth. They were not quick enough to get to Harry before another player joined the fight.

"You should not have come back to Hogwarts Tom," The voice of Albus Dumbledore said although he was currently not looking anything like himself.

"Dumbledore!" Voldie yelled, anger obvious in his voice, as he turned his wand towards his old professor and the two began to duel. Harry gave a mental sigh of relief that the two were going after each other rather than teaming up against him. He attempted to get off the stage they were all standing on and let the two old men fight it out when he realized that Dumbledore must have cast some sort of charm.

"You won't escape again Tom, I've made sure we wouldn't be interrupted this time," Albus growled out, sounding nothing like the grandfatherly old man he used to portray.

Harry wasn't sure what to do at that point as he was trapped at the front of the great hall with the two men he hated most on the planet dueling in front of him. He had the presence of mind to disillusion himself, silence his feet and then put up the strongest shield he knew. He decided his best bet would be to wait for the other two to tire out and then he could possibly take them both out and end the stupid war.

"HARRY!!" Hermione was screaming outside of the containment shield that Dumbledore had placed. Neville and Luna were battering at the shield along with Tonks and Remus trying to get inside and help their friend.

"He's tapped into the magical energies of the castle and using all the excess magic to help fuel the shield," Bill told them, finishing his curse-breaking scans of the containments shield. "It would take the entire cadre of Aurors along with all of us here and over half the students just to make a dent it in." He hated delivering bad news like that.

Hermione just sobbed with helplessness knowing her brother was on his own against those two. The only relief she had at the moment was that they could see that Voldemort and Dumbledore were focused on each other and seemed to have either not realized that Harry was trapped in with them or were ignoring him for the time being. She saw

Harry cast the disillusionment charm on himself and was relieved that he wasn't charging in like he used to and was staying out of the fight.

The Aurors and other Ministry personnel arrived moments later, Professor Flitwick having called for help. The other professors were making sure all the students were locked safely in their common rooms and herding the terrified scholars into classrooms and sealing them in. Every one of them would have to be checked for glamours and Polyjuice to make sure there were no other bad guys inside the castle.

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"We must help him," Amelia Bones said. She had Fudge locked in his office for 'security reasons' so he couldn't interfere and was taking charge of the scene, or at least she wanted to but the containment shield was keeping her and the Aurors out.

"I don't think we can," Bill told them. "The shield is self sustaining; the only way it will come down is if Dumbledore takes it down or if he dies."

"Then this is it then," Neville said resolutely. "The war will be decided here today."

"What do you mean?" Bones asked.

"There is a prophecy about Harry defeating both of them, this must be it." Neville told her and anyone else within listening distance.

"He's not even fighting them though," one of the Aurors pointed out.

"Why should he?" Draco Malfoy drawled, no one having noticed he was still in the room. He had been in attendance for Harry's presentation on Slytherin and Parseltongue. "The two old men are fighting each other and don't even seem to notice him, why join the fight now and risk having them team up on him. He's playing it smart and waiting until they are tired and is most likely hoping one will finish off the other and he will only need to fight one of them. It's a very Slytherin tactic." He was quite proud of what Harry was doing, he

hadn't known before that Harry was the Heir of Slytherin and knew that most of the fence sitters on the 'dark' side would follow Harry once they heard that bit of trivia. There were not many of the dark families that especially liked Voldemort, they just hated Dumbledore so much that it caused them to back Voldemort to keep their world safe. They didn't approve of mass killings and terror activities but they had no other rally point until now.

"How is he not getting hit with stray fire?" Tonks asked, her eyes glued to the fight.

"Parsel Magic shield charm," Neville answered. "He's been working on actively using Parseltongue to fight with since a lot of it can only be countered by other Parsel Magic and he's currently the only one alive who knows any of it."

"The power he knows not?" Bill asked Neville, having been wondering for a while what the special power is that Harry knew that the other two didn't with all their life experiences.

"We thought it might be," Hermione told him. "I hadn't realized he could actively use it yet." She looked to Neville for an explanation.

"He has a hard time controlling it and didn't want to say anything to you or Luna until he had better control since he knew you would want a demonstration and he could accidentally hurt you." Neville said wincing with remembered pain.

"That's how you got those burns and dislocated your shoulder!" Luna exclaimed with a stern look.

"I could add to that list," Madame Pomfrey told Luna. "He's been up to see me every other day after dueling practice." The two women looked disapprovingly at Neville; it was a look that seemed to be ingrained in Healers. "What I want to know is how he did all that damage to you."

"His shields are very strong but they don't always react that well to magic hitting them and sometimes reflect the magic back to the caster, except the Parsel Magic warps the original spell somehow

and makes it difficult to shield against.” Neville told them with a shrug. He knew it was important for Harry to learn and he wouldn’t let him practice alone.

“Can he cast offensive magic that way?” Bones asked with a hopeful tone.

“Yes but it is even more unreliable, at least for him.” Neville told them. “His magic is mostly light where Parsel Magic is mostly dark. Harry doesn’t have the emotional control that most who are talented in dark magic have and therefore the Parseltongue spells don’t always do -

what they were intended. He has to really concentrate on feeling what he wants the spell to accomplish.”

“What do you mean feel what he wants to accomplish?” Bones asked, she had heard a little about the discovered knowledge but didn’t know much.

“He struggled with casting curses at me, he would cast a stunner but since he didn’t really want me to be stunned, since we’re friends and it was just practice, it would sometimes completely fail or it would warp into something else.” Neville told them, not really wanting to go into detail on the embarrassing things that happened. “It seems his subconscious likes harmless but embarrassing pranks.”

“Is that why you had pink and green hair that one day at lunch?” Hermione giggled. “Or when you were covered in blue freckles?”

“Dormant Marauder genes,” Remus said with a smirk. “But all that aside, if he needs the spell or really concentrates then they work?” He asked getting back to the serious matter at hand as the duel between the Light and Dark Lord was still ongoing.

“The shield seems to be holding very well right now, which isn’t surprising as I would assume that he really doesn’t want to get hit with some of those hexes.” Neville said and the others agreed that they would be highly motivated to not get hit with splash off from Voldemort. “I’m thinking he won’t have much problem finding the motivation to curse either one of those two either and the Parsel

Magic should work as intended. Besides even if it doesn't it may be distracting for a megalomaniac like Voldemort to be wearing quacking ducky pajamas with pink fluffy bunny slippers or for Dumbledore to sprout a psychedelic afro."

The duel was tiring both men as they threw everything they had at each other. Dumbledore's skill with transfiguration and animation was keeping him from getting hit with all of Voldemort's nasty curses but Voldie was keeping Dumbles too busy to send many of his own curses back. They had been fighting for over an hour and both were running low on energy and their spells were not coming as fast or as powerful.

Harry was sitting at the very edge of the shield, somewhat protected by the podium he had been speaking from. He was partially meditating to keep the proper emotional frame of mind for his Parsel Magic but still keeping an eye on the intense duel in front of him. The two men who had caused him so much pain were certainly powerful and he was immensely glad they were not both coming at him at the same time. He could also see their spell casting speeds begin to slow and strain starting to show on their faces from the intense use of magic. He just hoped the fatigue would be enough to bring them down; he was waiting for the end of the duel and hoped to only have to face off against the winner. He could see his friends outside of the shield as well as all of the aurors and was glad to see that the situation was mostly under control, if you didn't count the two controlling old men who were dueling.

Harry had spent months thinking of the prophesy and he had come to the conclusion that he only had to kill Voldemort. He believed that he had already fulfilled the part with Dumbledore since he was fully discredited and a wanted fugitive. He also knew that if Voldie was able to overcome Dumbles then he would gloat like he had done in every duel Harry had witnessed. Harry was waiting for that moment when Voldie was reveling in the eminent demise of Dumbledore; he knew that was when he would have to strike if he had a chance of killing the Dark Lord.

He didn't have to wait too much longer for the moment to come. Dumbledore was fading quickly; he was over 50 years older than Voldemort after all. Both men were tired but still locked -

in a bitter duel. Finally Voldie connected with a blood freezing hex while Dumbles was busy blocking a severing charm aimed at his neck. The Dark Lord quickly followed with a severing charm to Dumbledore's wand hand, sending the wand skittering away and leaving the self proclaimed Light Lord unarmed. True to his character Tom Riddle, otherwise known as Lord Voldemort, began to cackle with glee seeing his long time rival lying bleeding and unarmed at his feet.

"You lost old man, how could you have ever beaten me? I am immortal and will rule the world!" Voldie began his monologue.

Harry sensed his opportunity and crept closer to the maniac. He waited until he was right behind him and cast a silent charm that went unnoticed by the two old men.

"What charm was that?" Amelia Bones quietly asked Neville, who shrugged that he didn't know. It was not a parsel spell and not one that he had ever seen Harry cast.

"It's an ancient soul binding spell; it will tie Voldemort's soul to his body so that he will never rise again when he dies." Hermione informed the aurors that were watching the spectacle. "The problem is that there is a simple counter spell so it has to be cast moments before the person dies."

Harry, oblivious to the spectators on the outside of the protective bubble, quickly began a long incantation in Parsel Magic. It was a spell that he had just read about and was unable to cast in practice. He had found the spell in the last of Salazar's journals where he talked about how he tried to use it in revenge of his wife but was unable. The spell roughly translated to "Judgment by the Innocent" and would cause anyone hit with the spell to relive any curse or wounds they have inflicted on an innocent. Harry wasn't sure it would work, but he thought it was poetic justice if it did.

The spell left his wand and Voldemort had just enough time to spin around to face Harry and yell "Potter!" before being hit with Harry's curse. Nothing seemed to happen immediately so the Dark Lord began to gloat. "Don't even have it in you to kill me do you Harry Potter. I shall enjoy watching you die," Voldemort said, beginning another monologue just before he began to writhe in pain. Riddle fell to the floor in agony, astounded and thinking that Harry had cast Crucio on him with the level of pain he was feeling.

Harry quickly disarmed the former head boy and began another long incantation in Parsel magic, this time it was a spell used by parents to bind their children's powers until they could begin their training. It was common in the founders' time that parents had to bind their children's powers to keep them from exposing the magical world; it was one of the main reasons they started Hogwarts. The spell hit Voldemort and everyone could see a white cord made of what appeared to be mist surround him and then sink into his body.

"Well done my boy," Albus Dumbledore said rasping as his life blood leaked out from his severed hand. "I knew you had it in you to defeat him without resorting to killing him. I taught you well."

"You taught me nothing and he is dead he just doesn't know it yet," Harry said with malice. "Now explain to me why I shouldn't kill you as well?" He asked his one time mentor. He hated the old headmaster for all the lies and deceit and wanted the man to suffer. He also was a good student in his Healing and First Aid class and knew the old man didn't have many moments left to live between his blood freezing as well as the blood leaking out where his had had been.

"I am the leader of the Light; I will regain my position now that everyone has seen where my loyalties are." Dumbledore sputtered. "Everyone will love me again, I am the Light Lord!"

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"Well oh mighty Light Lord I suggest you drop your barrier then as you seem to have more blood on the floor than in your body," Harry said, trying to understand how Dumbledore thought he would ever be forgiven. The screams from the once Dark Lord were growing in

intensity now as the evil man experienced first hand the horrors he inflicted on others.

Dumbledore finally realized just how hurt he was and quickly released the barrier on the hall. He knew that Madame Pomfrey could heal him in a blink and then he could go back to his office and all would be well in the world again with him running things from behind the scenes. He knew what was best for the wizarding world after all, everything he did was all for the greater good. He drifted off into images of great feasts honoring him and all the children of Hogwarts singing to him... he never even noticed when his breathing stopped followed quickly by his heart.

"He's dead," Pomfrey said once she was able to get near the old man. The aurors had insisted on making sure it was safe before she was allowed near him and Dumbledore had not lasted that long. "Between the blood freezing charm and the severed hand I don't believe I could have saved him anyway," she told them.

"What about Vol... Vol...what about him?" One of the aurors asked pointing to a still writhing in agony Voldemort.

"What spell did you use Harry?" McGonagall asked as she and everyone else watched the most feared Dark Lord in centuries scream in pain.

"The spell roughly translates to 'Judgment by the Innocent.' Tom Riddle is currently reliving every evil deed he ever did to an innocent. According to the notes it will start from the beginning and he will relive every moment of torture or malice he performed on an innocent. Salazar wasn't sure if it would kill the person at the end or not as he was not able to successfully cast the curse before he died. He created it as a punishment for the muggles who killed his wife. I thought it was a fitting end for the self proclaimed Heir of Slytherin to die by a spell his ancestor created." Harry told them.

"What if it doesn't kill him?" Bones asked curiously, as she wondered how she was supposed to try and take a Dark Lord into custody.

"I also bound his magic," Harry told them to the gasps of the gathered crowd. "I didn't want to take a chance that it wouldn't kill him. As the oldest direct heir of his family I was able to bind his powers much as a parent can bind their child's powers. The spell was used often in the founder's era since there was so much persecution by the muggles."

"So even if he lives, he's powerless?" Flitwick asked.

"Well his powers are bound but he still has them so he could break the bonds eventually or get someone to help him." Harry told them, "I would suggest we not allow that to happen." Everyone was in agreement on that point; they were not going to take chances with Voldemort this time around.

They wouldn't have to worry though as the man who was once Tom Riddle let out one last piercing scream and then was no more. Madame Pomfrey gathered up her courage and checked on Voldemort. "He's dead," she said quietly and then began to cry with relief and allowed out her grief over lost friends and loved ones. "He's finally dead."

Chapter 15: Starting Anew

The cheer started with the aurors and soon spread to the others in the castle... The Dark Lord was dead! Despite the best efforts of the aurors in the castle the news traveled quickly and reporters soon swarmed the school trying to gain entry to the castle.

Harry was mentally exhausted, he had finally fulfilled his destiny and he was tired. Hermione and his friends quickly hid him from the masses attempting to see their hero. They retreated back to the Chamber as it was the most protected area of the castle. The four friends just sat quietly reading, letting Harry come to terms with what just happened. They knew he was not ready to talk about it yet.

Harry appreciated the silence his friends were giving him. His head was a jumble of emotions as he tried to process what had just happened. One minute he had been presenting his findings on Slytherin and the next he was trapped next to battling psychopaths and was finally able to fulfill the hard parts of the prophesy. He still wondered about the lines that said he would lead the wizarding world into a new era. He hoped that meant his defeat would lift the shadows of war the people were under but was afraid he would once again have to enter the spotlight and point out the wizarding world sheep just how backwards they were.

"Harry, should we ask the elves to send dinner down here?" Hermione asked cautiously as none of the friends knew what type of mood he was in.

"No, I think it's time to face the crowd and let everyone know he really is dead and is not coming back this time. I'm sure the Great Hall is swarming with reporters by now, may as well get it over with." He told them with a sigh as he stood to make his way up to his adoring public, he just hoped he would actually get the chance to eat something.

The Great Hall was rowdy and packed with students, reporters and the academics from the Symposium. The moment Harry and friends entered the room went completely silent for a few moments before breaking out in ear shattering cheers. Harry made his way to the front

and stood behind the very podium that had protected him from the fight between the two old men. As he took a moment to compose his thoughts he ran his fingers over a burn mark on the wood, proof that a battle had taken place there a few hours ago.

“As I told some of you earlier today, the so called Dark Lord Voldemort’s real name is Tom Marvolo Riddle. Tom was the child of Merope Guant, younger sister of Morfin Guant who was the last confirmed Heir of the Slytherin line. Merope had very limited magical ability; her own father despised her as he thought she was a squib. When her father and brother were arrested for crimes against muggles and resisting arrest, she was finally free to go after the only man she had ever desired. Tom Riddle was the local squire’s son and very handsome but never gave plain and poor Merope a second glance, then one day he ran off and eloped with Merope. A few months later he returned, alone and saying he had been hoodwinked. Merope we assume used a love potion to ensnare him and then convinced herself he really loved her and stopped giving him the potion. What Tom Riddle either never knew or didn’t care was that Merope was with child when he left her. Merope struggled through the end of her pregnancy alone, somehow making it to London and the safety of an orphanage. She lived long enough to give birth to her son who she named Tom after his father, Marvolo after her father and then gave him his father’s name of Riddle.” Harry paused here to see the reaction of the crowd to his story so far.

“Young Tom grew up in that very same muggle orphanage as no one named Riddle ever came to claim him. He was a strange boy, according to the records, and we must all realize that his accidental magic would not be understood by the muggle caretakers at the orphanage. By a young age Tom had realized he was different, had realized he could ‘do things’ and make other children obey him. He already had established a pattern of taking revenge on anyone that crossed him before he had ever heard of Hogwarts or been told that he was a wizard.”

“Albus Dumbledore knew that young Tom was heading down the wrong path and rather than do anything about it, he ignored it. Dumbledore thought Tom was the last descendent of Slytherin, or the

Heir of Slytherin, and I assume thought he would make a good rival. Albus loved the idea of taking out another Dark Lord to cement his position as the 'Greatest Wizard of the Age.' He knew that Tom was a parselmouth and knew about the basilisk in the Chamber when it was first opened when Tom was in school. The two of them have been fighting since Tom was a first year but Albus could not defeat him. Why you may ask? Well because it was fated that another would defeat them both. In the summer of 1979 Albus was interviewing a potential candidate for the vacant Divination post. He was ready to dismiss her as a total fraud when she went rigid, her eyes blank and began speaking in a rough voice. She gave a prophesy that has ruled my life until this very day. It went like this."

The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches... Born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies... And the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not... And either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives... The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord will be born as the seventh month dies... He will be betrayed by those who should have protected him, and the light will rally behind him... Revered yet not feared, he will lead the wizarding world into a new era.

The one with the power to vanquish the Light Lord approaches... Born to those who will die to protect him, born as the seventh month dies... And the Light Lord will use him for his own ends, but he will be stronger than the Light Lord knows... And in his strength he will overcome and then expose the Light Lord's manipulations... The one with the power to vanquish the Light Lord will be born as the seventh month dies... He will be accepted by those who once despised him, and the dark will follow his lead... Revered yet not feared, he will lead the wizarding world into a new era.

The room was left silent and wide eyed as Harry revealed to all the contents of the prophesy. "Albus determined that two families would fit the profile that were in his Order of the Phoenix. Both Lily and James Potter and Alice and Frank Longbottom had openly defied Voldemort and his death eaters before and lived to tell the tale. At the time of the prophesy, they had each only defied him three times so he kept a careful watch waiting to see which ones would defy him again

and then announce they were having a child. He did not have to wait long as on Halloween the Potters and Longbottoms were celebrating together in Diagon Alley when Riddle attacked. They led the resistance against him and caused his forces to retreat, thus defying him for a third time each. Shortly after both Lily and Alice found out they were pregnant and due at the end of July or early August. Albus knew whichever couple had a boy, that child would be the chosen one. He figured that if they were both boys, then whichever one was born closest to the end of the month would be the one. My good friend and god-brother Neville Franklin Longbottom was born exactly 7 minutes before me. As luck would have it, he was born at 11:58 pm on July 30th while I was born at 12:05 am on July 31st. I still maintain that those were the luckiest 7 minutes of Neville's life!" He told them, only getting a chuckle from his friends and a smile from a few others.

"Now most of you know what happened the night my parents were taken from me and shortly after when Neville's parents were taken from him in an even worse way. The intervening years were hard on both of us. I was told part of the prophecy at the end of my 5th year. Dumbledore told me the part where I would have the power to destroy Voldemort; he told me less than an hour after I watched my god-father die. I found out the truth about my life shortly after that and began my quest to fulfill the real prophecy. It was not until after Christmas and the discovery of the Founder's Library that I found something that could qualify as the 'power he knows not.' I discovered the lost art of Parsel Magic. I wasn't sure it would be enough until I found a spell in the last of Salazar's journals where he talked about a spell he tried to use it in revenge of his wife but was unable. The spell roughly translated to "Judgment by the Innocent" and would cause anyone hit with the spell to relive any curse or wounds they have inflicted on an innocent. I wasn't sure it would work as the person who it is cast at must be truly evil and the person casting it has had to have their innocence stripped away by that person. I figured it was poetic justice to use it against Voldemort who assumed he was the Heir of Slytherin." Harry then went on to describe the fight between Dumbles and Voldie and how he took out the most feared Dark Lord in history. "Tom Marvolo Riddle is no more. I hit him with a soul binding curse before he died. He will never return to haunt this world again. He and Dumbledore have both moved on to the next great adventure and I truly hope that wherever their souls

went that my parents, my god-father, my friend Cedric Diggory and all the hundreds more lost to those two maniacs are now at peace as they are finally avenged. May we never forget the sacrifices that so many made that we may live now in a better world. May we never allow bitterness to fester in our hearts or prejudice to cloud our judgment. I hope for a world that I will be proud to be a part of, where one day my children will not have to worry about terrorists like the Death Eaters, where a muggle-born witch can become Minister of Magic or Headmistress of Hogwarts, where it's our abilities that we are judged upon and not our blood. I hope that you all will join me in creating lasting peace in our world." Harry finished as walked to the Gryffindor table to sit down and eat his dinner. He ignored the shouts of praise and the cheering and tucked into his dinner surrounded by his closest friends and for once content with knowing that every eye in the hall was upon him.

The school year was finished and with no Dumbledore to force him to Privet Drive Harry and Hermione apparated straight from King's Cross to Black Manor. Neville and Luna would be arriving soon as they were staying with Harry for most of the summer. Remus was already there and had picked up Dudley from Smeltings the week earlier. As Dudley was considered a squib, he was now considered of age in the Wizarding world as he had turned 17 in February. Dudley had been studying non-stop since he arrived and Remus was beginning to tutor him in some of the more obviously magical subjects like Potions, Herbology, Divination and Care of Magical Creatures. He and Hermione had tutors lined up for the summer to teach them Gobbledygook and Elvish so they could get a start on their Non-Human language OWL and were still trying to decide if they would attempt a NEWT later.

Dudley was going to sit for a few of his OWLs over the summer. His tutors told him he was ready for the triple As: Ancient Runes (it seemed it ran in the family to understand them so easily), Arithmacy (muggle math really helped) and Astronomy. He would also take the OWL in Fine Arts focusing on Singing, musical composition and pottery. He was also learning the piano and would add either sculpture or photography to get his NEWT. He was going to attempt his OWL in Magical Craftsmanship as well with a focus on jewelry design and stained glass. He had taken a workshop at Smeltings on

metallurgy as well as glasswork but was not confident enough in them yet, but they would be what he would add to get his NEWT. Remus was going to give him mock exams in History of Magic to see if he was ready for that exam as well. Hermione had looked further into the testing requirements and found that Dudley could take 17 of the OWL exams since he found he could fly they added the Flying exam to the list. He would only be able to sit 12 NEWT exams since Runes, Arithmancy, Herbology, Potions and Flying required magic for the NEWT. Arithmancy NEWT exams cover the basics of spell creation, Runes covers runic shielding and rune casting, Herbology and Potions require specific spells on the plants/potions and Flying requires charming of brooms and equipment. With 17 exams he could take he wanted to space them out and was excited that he was ready to pass at least 5 maybe 6 after just a year of study. He knew if he passed all 6 he would be tied with many of the current Hogwarts students and also knew by the time he was done with all 17 OWLs and 12 NEWTs he would have passed more exams than most of the fully magical members of their world.

Neville would be staying with Harry for the summer to escape his grandmother. He was using the excuse of Harry's greenhouses and gardens to get her to agree. He loved and missed his parents but his grandmother seemed to think they needed to visit them for hours each day in the hospital, it was depressing watching them just lay there. He was proud of them for standing up the Death Eaters and desperately wished they would wake up but didn't think they would want him wasting away at their bedsides. His Occlumency training had unlocked some of his very early memories and he remembered that awful night. What he hadn't told anyone is that his mother protected him using her own body for a shield. She wrapped herself around him and even under the excruciating pain of the torture curse she never let him go. It was this that kept him from being cursed as well. No one year old would be able to survive even a few seconds of Crucio pain. His mother may not be remembered for her sacrifice like Lily Potter, but she gave up her life for her son as well. Harry got it right when he told the press that Neville's parents were taken from him in an even worse way. It would have been much easier on his family if his parents had been killed rather than permanently incapacitated. He thought it was so unfair that they were trapped in a less than half-life here when they could be happier in the next world.

The Wizarding world was still in shock from the defeat of its biggest tyrant. They didn't know how exactly to move on from there and were clamoring for Harry's advice on a daily basis. He was their ultimate hero and could do no wrong in the eyes of many. They didn't understand why he wanted a quiet summer or even why he was planning on finishing Hogwarts. Many had suggested that he immediately be made Minister of Magic, others wanted him to take over as head of the Wizengamot. He did agree to join the Hogwarts Board of Governors' once he finished school and promised to take up his seats in the Wizengamot when he came of age but flatly refused everything else. Slowly but surely the wizarding people would begin to think for themselves again. It would be a long road but they had nowhere to go but up and they would succeed, Harry would make sure of it.

The summer flew by for the teens. All 5 friends attended a session at The Farm. Luna attending the Announcer camp, Hermione a Beginner Flyers camp, Neville and Dudley went to the regular camp to improve their flying as a chaser and beater and of course Harry joined him as the team's seeker. Dudley started his idea of opening a funky t-shirt shop in the wizarding world by designing a few to be sold at the Farm gift shop, they were a big hit. The Farm was fully staffed and all the new additions had been finished. Attendance at the summer camps was at an all-time high with the lower fees and Pro team attendance was up over 50% and looked like it would continue to rise. Overall Harry did an amazing job of getting it back to its former glory and was now looking into some of the other business he had interests in or owned outright. He figured if he had that much success at The Farm he would try it elsewhere. He had put off joining the English National team so he could still play at Hogwarts for his final year but he got lots of advice from the Farm pro players on how to stay in top form.

When school began again for the gang's 7th and final year at Hogwarts Harry was both excited and sad. It would be his last year as a student at his favorite place on earth, but he would always be Hogwarts' heir so he would always be welcome. He was excited as it was his first every school year that would be both Dumbledore and Voldemort free and he was thinking that maybe, just maybe he might

be able to be normal this year. He was hoping to play Quidditch, do well in school, have fun with his friends and maybe even get a girlfriend. It was the start of the rest of his life and he was feeling free to be himself. He was sure everything would work out fine in the future and if not he had his friends and family and they could do anything if they worked together.

The End... or the start of rest of their lives.

Author's note: I am going to take a break from writing for a while. I have two different stories started but they are both 'stuck' so I'm going to finish them before I try and post them so I don't get into the place where writer's block causes months between updates. Thanks for all your support. Check out my favorites or my bio for a list of other stories to read!

God Bless!

~Redfrog